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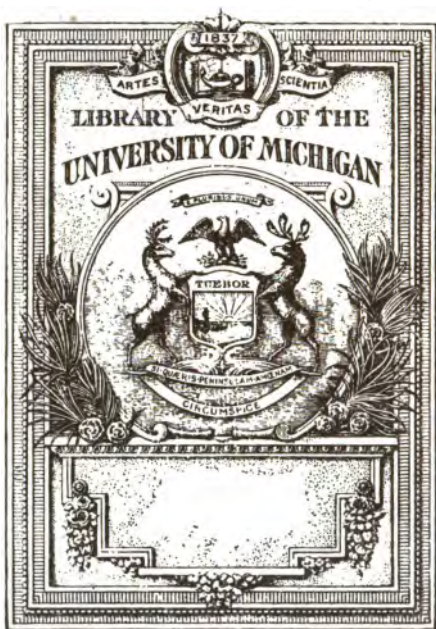
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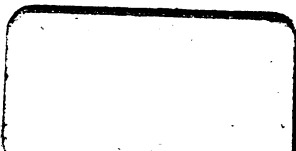
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# ITALY'S GREAT WAR

AND

## HER NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

BY  
MARIO ALBERTI - GENERAL CARLO CORSI  
- ARMANDO HODNIG - TOMASO SILLANI -  
ATTILIO TAMARO AND ETTORE TOLOMEI

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER BY  
· H. NELSON GAY ·

WITH 20 ILLUSTRATIONS AND 4 MAPS

EDITORS - ALFIERI & LACROIX - MILAN

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H. NELSON GAY

T. SILLANI AND A. HODNIG

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**PART I**

**Italy and Austria 1814-1917**

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## CHAPTER I.

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### THE CURSE OF AUSTRIAN DOMINATION IN ITALY DOWN TO 1866.

**T**he Austrians are really the greatest brutes that ever called themselves by the undeserved name of civilized men ». This damnatory appreciation of Austrian political character is from a no less authoritative pen than that of Lord Palmerston, and was formulated by him as British secretary of state for foreign affairs and sent to his ambassador at Vienna, Viscount John Ponsonby, on September 9, 1849.

Palmerston possessed in a high degree the Anglo-Saxon sense of justice and fair-play and his noble spirit never failed to be aroused to fierce indignation at news of cowardly cruelty and oppression. In September 1849 Austria had been at her usual work, beating and bullying, taxing and arresting, torturing and executing the unfortunate inhabitants of the various foreign provinces subject to her domination. « Austrian atrocities in

Galicia, in Italy, in Hungary, in Transylvania are only to be equalled by the proceedings of the negro race in Africa and Haiti », declared Palmerston. « Their late exploit of flogging forty old people, including two women at Milan, some of the victims being gentlemen, is really too blackguard and disgusting a proceeding... I do hope that you will maintain the dignity and honour of England by expressing *openly and decidedly* the disgust which such proceedings excite in the public mind in this country »

Austria has changed neither her methods nor her mentality in the more than half a century that has followed; nor can any right-minded Anglo-Saxon fail to condemn with utter abhorrence today, as did Palmerston in his day, the brutality and bad faith which have continuously characterized the government of her conglomerate Empire since the Treaty of Vienna. Austria is not a nation; Austria is the negation of nationality (1), and she has maintained her unfortunate sovereignty only by militarism and by an equilibrium of hatred artfully stimulated between the dissimilar nationalities which constitute the Empire. « The Austrian Government know no method of administration but what consists in flogging, imprisoning, and shooting », continued Palmerston. « The *Austrians* know no argument but

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(1) The population of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is made up of the following ethnical elements: Germans, Magyrs (Hungarians), Poles, Czechs (Bohemians, Moravians, Slovaks), Roumanians, Servians, Ruthenians, Croatians, Italians, Slovenes and Ladins.



force... As to working upon their feelings of generosity and gentlemanliness that is out of the question ».

Austrian misgovernment in *Italy* was particularly odious to the liberal English statesman. « The real fact is that the Austrians have no business in Italy at all », he asserted, « and have no real right to be there. The right they claim is founded upon force of arms and the Treaty of Vienna. The Treaty of Vienna they themselves set at nought when they took possession of Cracow... They cannot claim the treaty when it suits their purpose, and at the same time, when it suits their purpose, reject it... Austria has never possessed Italy as part of her empire, but has always held it as a conquered territory. There has been no mixture of races. The only Austrians have been the troops and the civil officers. She has governed it as you govern a garrison town, and her rule has always been hateful » (1).

This impeachment of Austria for the atrocities of her misgovernment is of even greater weight when viewed in connection with Palmerston's sincere desire for the preservation of the bulk of the Austrian Empire, in the interest of the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe. For him Austria was the pivot of the international situation and her existence was essential; hence,

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(1) Letters of Palmerston to Ponsonby, September 9, 1849, and Augusto 31, 1848, published in Evelyn Ashley's *The life and correspondence of Henry John Temple Viscount Palmerston*. Vol. II, London, Richard Bentley and son, 1879, pp. 105-107, 88-90.

viewing Europe as a statesman, from the standpoint of British interest, notwithstanding his hatred of Austria's nefarious methods of government, he cynically wrote: « The maintenance of the Austrian Empire is an object of general interest to all Europe, and to no country more than England » (1).

Austria well understood her pivotal importance and dexterously played upon the hatreds existing between the great European powers, as she played upon the hatreds existing between the nationalities which constituted her own dominions. « You have your ideas of liberty, of constitutional government, of religion, all in opposition to ours », said Count Buol to the British minister at Vienna, Lord Loftus, in January 1859. « But in the *catégorie politique* you are with us. We were your great allies against Napoleon I; we have the same political interests; we have mutual friends and mutual enemies. On that *terrain* we meet » (2).

How profoundly has the situation changed! The great war of 1914 has utterly wrecked the old international combinations, and Austria can no longer count upon the sempiternal equilibrium of international jealousies and hatreds to save her from her inexorable fate. Today she is summoned before the judgement-seat of civilization and, with the Kaiser and the Sultan as her sole

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(1) Letters of Palmerston to Ponsonby, February 11, 1848, and *circa* May 1848. *Idem* pp. 63-64, 87.

(2) Lord Augustus Loftus, *Diplomatic reminiscences*. Vol. I, London, Cassel and Company, 1892, pp. 377-378.

possible advocates, she must answer for the crimes of a century. Francis Joseph, « the Emperor of the hanged », as Carducci justly apostrophized him, after an iniquitous reign of sixty-eight years has gone before a still higher tribunal; but his successor, Charles the First, must answer for the full calendar of sin of the House of Habsburgh whose cloak of bloody guilt has descended upon his imperial shoulders. For the sake of peace and of the balance of European power Austria has for a century been allowed by the civilized powers of Europe to pursue the course of the barbarian. Today the peace of the world has been broken by her, and the balance of European power has been completely destroyed. She has long abused the patience of the world. Today she must pay in blood and by the disrapture of her Empire for the long decades of bloody torture and oppression of her innocent subjects. When the balance of European power is again restored, she will be found shorn of the power of which she has proved herself a thousand times unworthy, and the nationalities which have long been condemned to bear the yoke of her brutal domination will finally have won for themselves their just places at the banquet of the nations, and may look forward with confidence to the full enjoyment of their hard won independence, and to democratic self-government.

A rapid review of some features of Italy's past martyrdom under Austrian rule will help to exhibit this present fate of Austria in its true light of long delayed retributive justice.

\* \* \*

Austria came out from the Congress of Vienna in 1815; mistress of Lombardy, and of the Veneto, of the Trentino, of Julian Venetia and of Dalmatia all provinces which by the divine right of nationality belong to United Italy. Besides this actual territorial domination in Italy, she had also dukelings and a duchess of her own imperial house upon the petty thrones of Modena, Tuscany and Parma; and by intrigue and the encouragement of the elements of disorder in the various states of the peninsula she had managed to conclude secret treaties with their separate intimidated governments. In fact she may be said to have been effectively in control of the destinies of all Italy, throughout whose extent she was served by a widely extended and intricate system of espionage such as would compel the admiration even of a twentieth century German. In all her methods and policy of treacherous intrigue, corruption and intimidation in Italy, Austria stands forth in history as the luminous precursor of the Germany of today; her methods and policy carefully anticipated those adopted by Germany in the latter's relations with foreign peoples during the present century; as Palmerston with truth declared, one argument only was recognized — *force*; and as for generosity in her conduct toward non-German peoples, that was out of the question.

The consolidation of northern Italy from the Ticino to the Julian Alps under the dominion of Austria, in 1814 and 1815 and the years which



**King Victor Emanuel III at the General Headquarters  
of the Army (the Count of Turin on the left and the  
Duke of Aosta on the right).**



**H. E. Paolo Boselli**  
**President of the Council of Ministers.**

followed, was characterized by three cardinal enormities of misgovernment: the first was the supplanting of all Italian civil and military officials, from the clerk and corporal to the judge and general, by Austrians almost all of whom were unacquainted with the language, and ignorant of the habits of the country — by 1817 two Italians only remained in the higher departments of the Lombard government (1); the second, the levying of crushing taxes (2) — in 1817 landed proprietors paid about 37 per cent of their annual produce in direct taxes; the third, the expending of a large part of the revenue extorted from Italy, not in the provinces in which it was raised, but so far as possible in, and for the benefit of, the German and other provinces of the Empire — during the Austrian domination in the Lombardo-Veneto from 1814 to 1859, government expenditure for these provinces amounted to only about fifty per cent of the revenue collected there; the remaining fifty per cent was carried out of the country and expended elsewhere in the Empire, while the Italian provinces received no benefits in

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(1) Henri Beyle in a letter addressed to de Mareste on April 14, 1818, stated that six hundred Italian judges had been removed by the Austrians, and with their families had been reduced to beggary. « The removal of these judges has profoundly stirred the people ». Stendhal, *Correspondance*, Vol. II, Paris, Charles Bosse, 1908, p. 68.

(2) Taxes in Lombardy and the Mantovano were officially estimated in 1795 at a little over six million florins and in 1815 at a little over twelve million florins, an increase of about one hundred per cent. Augusto Sandonà, *Il Regno Lombardo-Veneto, 1814-1859*, Milano, L. F. Coliati, 1912. Appendix.

return (1). This was nothing less than legalized robbery on a vast scale.

Industries in the German and other provinces were also favoured to the detriment of those in the Italian provinces — for example, the very armies by which Austrian domination was maintained in Italy, were furnished with supplies purchased whenever practicable, though necessarily at a much greater expense, in the German provinces.

Venice was the city to suffer most from the ruinous effects of Austrian misrule. In 1797 it numbered 137,240 inhabitants, including those of Murano, Burano and Malamocco. In 1824 its population reckoned on the same basis had decreased to 114,000.

The number of gondoliers employed in Venice has long been considered the gauge of its prosperity. In 1797 there were 4,000; in 1824 there were 900. In 1824 in Venice itself, exclusive of the three adjacent communes mentioned, more than 40,000 of the inhabitants were unable to support themselves and required charitable aid. In an unpublished petition to the Austrian Emperor, Francis I. drawn up in 1825 by the Patriarch of Venice, Monsignor Pyrcker, himself a Hungarian, the conditions of Venice are frankly and despairingly described (2): « One hears only the laments

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(1) Sandonà, *idem*, Part. V, chap. VII, and Appendix IX.

(2) Pyrcker's *Rappresentanza*, of which a copy is preserved in the Museo Correr in Venice (Codice Cicogna, CCLIII, 3535, 3) is furnished with an important descriptive table showing the differences in the population of Venice between the years 1797 and 1824.



of ruined shop-keepers in absolute indigence; of captains in the mercantile marine who bemoan their enforced idleness; of sailors, mechanics, workmen and boatmen dismissed by their employers, and who know not where to turn or what occupation to seek in order to provide for their numerous families ».

Nor had the picture changed in 1829 when the deputy du Bois sent a report to Francis I (1). « The national manufactures finding no market for their goods languish, and the workmen are without means of subsistence. The construction of mercantile ships has ceased, as has that of all which pertains to their equipment. All those who earned their living from maritime commerce are left without work ». Lawyers alone are busy amid the general desolation, continued du Bois. « Under these lugubrious conditions the population of Venice diminishes daily... The unrented, empty buildings are almost without value, their possession is a loss to the owner and their repair is neglected; time has hastened its ravages and already in various parts of the city many ancient buildings have collapsed, having been abandoned and left without repair. The unfortunate owners have no choice, but are forced to demolish their houses and sell the materials at a miserable price. These demolitions are going on daily ». In Venice the Austrian soldiers, judges and employees

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(1) A copy of the report of du Bois, *Quadro di Venezia e del suo commercio attuale* is also preserved in the Museo Correr (Codice Cologna, CCLIII, 3535, 2).

alone prospered. For the Venetian population, all was misery and impending ruin.

In the light of these terrible conditions the famous lines of Lord Byron in the Fourth Canto of *Childe Harold*, written in 1817, acquire a new meaning (1):

« In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,  
And silent rows the songless Gondolier;  
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,  
And Music meets not always noy the ear:

St. Mark yet sees his Lion where he stood  
Stand, but in mockery of his withered power,  
Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,  
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour  
When Venice was a Queen with an unequalled dower.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns —  
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt;  
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains  
Clank over sceptered cities; »

And in his *Ode on Venice*:

« Oh! agony — that centuries should reap  
No mellow harvest! Thirteen hundred years  
Of wealth and glory turned to dust and tears;  
And every monument the stranger meets,  
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;  
And even the Lion all subdued appears,  
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,  
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats  
The echo of thy Tyrant's voice along  
The soft waves, once all musical to song ».

Byron had established his residence in Venice in 1816, and proved himself a keen observer of the conditions in the midst of which he lived.

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(1) *Childe Harold*, Canto IV, stanzas 3, 11, 12. *Ode on Venice*, Lines 14-23.

The great passion of his life was liberty, but about him here he saw only oppression and tyranny; « An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt; kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains clank over sceptered cities ». In these three trenchant lines the poet pictures the utter humiliation of Venice and the brutality of the Austrian domination in northern Italy, which he was one of the first Englishmen to appreciate and to stigmatize in the scathing terms which it deserved.

The Lombardo-Venetian public he described in a letter of this period as « perhaps the most oppressed in Europe »; and two years later he wrote from Ravenna in the Papal States where Austrian influence was supreme: « Of the state of things here it would be difficult and not very prudent to speak at large, the Huns opening all letters: I wonder if they can read them when they have opened them? if so, they may see, in my most legible hand, that I think them damned scoundrels and barbarians, their Emperor a fool, and themselves more fools than he; all which they may send to Vienna, for anything I care. They have got themselves masters of the Papal police, and are bullying away; but some day or other they will pay for it all. It may not be very soon; . . . but I suppose Providence will get tired of them at last, and show that God is not an Austrian » (1).

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(1) Byron, *Letters*, Vol. III-V, London, John Murray, 1900. To Thomas Moore, September 19, 1818. To John Murray, November 23 1820. Extracts from a diary, January 12, 1821.

Byron was right. The day of reckoning for the Austrian oppressors of Italy might be long delayed, but it would certainly come. In this twentieth century Providence *has become* tired of them *at last*. — God is neither an Austrian nor a Hun.

But the author of *Childe Harold* was not the only Anglo-Saxon who early gave public expression to his revulsion at Austria's system of government in Italy. W. L. Rose, who travelled in the Lombardo-Veneto in this same period, also gave free vent to his execration of Austrian tyranny in his *Letters from the north of Italy addressed to Henry Hallam*, and declared that his feelings represented those universally prevailing among the English (1): « I never yet met with an Englishman, who knew enough of the language of Italy to inform himself of what was passing about him, — I never knew one employed or unemployed, who did not feel what I feel, and generally in a much keener degree than myself ».

The purpose and end of Austrian methods of administration and government in the Lombardo-Veneto may be summed up in one word, *Germanization*. The term occurs early in Austrian official despatches and the vital error of the policy which it defined was quickly recognized by the more able of the Austrian governors. The predatory fiscal system imposed by the foreign oppressor and the general misery of the population

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(1) Published in London in two volumes by John Murray in 1819. The above quotation is from, Vol. II, p. 66.

were in themselves sufficient to account for the grave discontent and the strong aversion with which the Austrian was regarded from the outset in Italy, but the unpardonable crime, the fundamental error which excluded all possibility of conciliation between the government and the governed and which bred an ever increasing hatred of the oppressor for half a century, was the Austrian policy of *Germanization* — and it is the knowledge that a similar policy of denationalization is still pursued by Austria toward most of the non-German peoples of her kingdom, that has preserved the sempiternal hatred against her in Italy to-day.

Count Strassoldo, the far-seeing governor of Lombardy, in a report addressed to Metternich in 1821, enumerated a number of specific causes of discontent among the people and then added: « But all reduce themselves finally to the great question of *Germanization*; that is to say to the system of governing Italy in the same manner and with nearly the same forms as the other provinces of the Monarchy... There is a general tendency to believe that a climate, customs and a history different from those of other peoples requires also a different system of administration; this belief is not an outgrowth of liberalism, but is based upon national pride and is inborn in the Italian character ».

In the mouth of a high Austrian official this is a striking tribute to the Italian sentiment of nationality. A year before in another report Strassoldo had also written: « The Lombards have

not been able, are not able, and never will be able to accustom themselves to the German forms given to the administration of their country; they abhor them and they detest the system of uniformity by which one puts them on a par with Germans, Bohemians and Galicians ».

And what was the result of forcing this obnoxious system upon the Italian provinces? We give the situation in the words of this same courageous Austrian official: « Our Italian possessions are guaranteed to us only by physical force, moral force is entirely lacking to us there » (1).

This also is most precious testimony from the lips of the Austrian governor of Lombardy! It was incontestably true in 1820 when it was given — true in 1849 when Palmerston declared that « Austria never possessed Italy as part of her Empire, but has always held it as conquered territory » — it continued true in the Lombardo-Veneto until Austria was driven from northern Italy as far as the national frontier won by the war of 1866 — and it is equally true today in the unredeemed provinces which were excluded from United Italy by that unequitable frontier of 1866, and which are still suffering the martyrdom of Austria's efforts at denationalization.

The population of the Italian provinces which were subjected of the Austrian yoke by the Treaty of Vienna for nearly a half-century numbered

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(1) From the original reports given by Sandonà. *Idem*, pp. 378-379, 374, 373.

about five millions. The population of the other parts of the Austrian Empire numbered about thirty millions. The odds therefore, in view of the numerical inferiority of the Italians, were overwhelmingly against the success of any revolution undertaken for the liberation of the Italian provinces from foreign domination. Furthermore, Austria kept an army of occupation in Italy of such strength (1) as to make still more evident the inutility of any efforts at Italian revendication, unless accompanied by assistance from outside. Apparently one reasonable course only remained for the patriots: to keep uncontaminated and to strengthen the national sentiment, defending it stoutly against the persistent machinations of the oppressor to *Germanize* it; and to await the occasion of a European war which would present a situation favourable for revolution.

An efficient instrument with which to work out this national programme was found in secret political societies. Such societies had existed also in the Napoleonic period and were not peculiar to Italy. In their names, however, in organization, and in many of the aims professed, they were new, and they now attained a much wider development. In the Lombardo-Veneto were the Car-

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(1) According to Austrian official statistics the army of occupation in the Lombardo-Veneto varied from 63,000 to 69,000 men. These figures may have been exaggerated for politico-financial purposes by the Austrians, but even allowing for such exaggeration the army was very large, and at the slightest indication of unrest in Italy it was immediately heavily reinforced.

*bonari* and its affiliated sects, the *Adelphi* or *Filadelfi*, and the *Sublimi Maestri Perfetti*.

In the rites prescribed there was much grotesque mysticism; members are exhorted to renounce personal ambition and to labour for the perfection of society; but the purposes of the societies were in reality concrete and tremendously serious, and their members devoted themselves to death. The name of *Italy* recurs throughout their statutes as « our country », « the Mother Country »; and the « independence of all Italy » was the supreme end, to be secured « by any and every means ». « Death to tyrants », and the expulsion of the foreign oppressor from Italian soil were necessary concomitants.

Austria quickly discovered the active propaganda initiated by these societies and determined to exterminate the evil by the roots. In the penal code applied to the Lombardo-Veneto, membership in any society whose aim was to secure Italian independence, or even to urge political reforms of any kind, was declared high treason. And the elaborate Austrian police organization set to work with enthusiasm to hunt out the patriots. Important arrests were effected in December 1816, and were followed by the famous trial of the « Carbonari del Polesine », which terminated with a death-sentence for thirteen members of the secret societies, including Felice Foresti and Antonio Solera. This was only the beginning of the terrorist crusade. The jailers of the Lombardo-Veneto could soon justly boast that their clientele had changed for the better; in fact the



new element which might now be seen behind prison bars — the political suspects — counted in their number many who by birth or intellect were the noblest in the land. Between 1820 and 1824 three other great trials were held and the number of those condemned to capital punishment for the single crime of having too ardently loved their country, rose to thirty-six; among them were Count Federico Confalonieri, Silvio Pellico, Piero Maroncelli, and Marquis Giorgio Pallavicino. These death-sentences were all commuted into long terms of imprisonment; Confalonieri's, for example, because of irregularities of procedure in the trial of himself and his companions, was commuted with much reluctance by the Emperor into imprisonment for life — but no new trial was ordered (1); as if to excuse the imperial clemency, the lot of the prisoners was rendered so piteous as to be infinitely worse than death. Loaded with chains they were transported to the prison fortress of Spielberg in Moravia, where the studied infliction of mental tortures (2) as well as phy-

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(1) Confalonieri was subjected to eighty cross-examinations in the two years between his arrest and his condemnation to death. For three months he was kept in ignorance of the charges brought against him. The trial was carried on in secret. He was denied a copy of the Austrian code of civil law and was not permitted to employ his own lawyers in the defence. The loathsome cell in which he was confined was commonly known as the *cloaca massima*.

(2) The prisoners were allowed no books excepting a few of a strictly religious character. For many, this prohibition was the worst torture of their long martyrdom. All were employed in making either stockings or thread. Sandonà, *Contributo alla storia dei processi del ventuno e dello Spielberg*. Torino, Fratelli Bocca, 1911, pp. 295, 341.

sical hardships rendered their condition such as to serve as a lesson to all their fellow-citizens of the Lombardo-Veneto who might be tempted in the future to conspire against their « most benign and clement sovereign ». This was the viewpoint of the oppressor.

For these prisoners, accustomed to the sunny skies of Italy, the rigorous climate and prison privations of Spielberg promised to substitute their deadly work for that of the gallows; it was as if the Austrian government, afraid of the political consequences of capital punishment, was seeking to accomplish its ends by exposure and disease. In fact, of the political prisoners who, after long years of inhuman confinement, went out from the prison walls of Spielberg alive, the greater number took their way into exile with their health shattered for life.

The effect of this characteristically Teutonic policy of terrorism was quite the opposite of that which those who had devised it, sought. In 1821 Strassoldo had warned Metternich against instituting « illegal prosecutions » which, wrote the judicious governor of Lombardy, would only serve to rouse the revolutionary party and would render powerful assistances to it in its work of patriotic propaganda. (1) But Metternich was always deaf to all counsels except those inspired by unquestioning faith in the efficacy of brute force and

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(1) Strassoldo continued strenuously to oppose the cruel procedure of the prosecuting judges in the trials of the Italian patriots, until he was menaced with removal from office. Sandonà, *Il Regno*, p. 378.

coercion; he insisted upon his policy of subjugation, and thereby helped to make the *Germanization* of Italy doubly impossible. If there had ever been a chance of transforming Italians into docile and faithful subjects of the House of Habsburg, that chance had now been forever destroyed; for Austrian methods of government and administration had been frankly revealed to the people, and the soul of the Teuton had been laid bare before the Italian in all the nakedness of its brutality.

But Austria had not confined her tyrannical course within the frontiers of her own Italian provinces. Her armies had invaded the territory of the King of Naples (1) and that of the King of Sardinia in 1821, in order to repress liberal revolutionary movements in these states; and throughout the peninsula she instigated and assisted the Italian rulers to savage acts of repression and to relentless persecution of the secret societies. Metternich considered it to be one of his « gravest duties », as he wrote to the Emperor, « to keep watch upon and to direct the Italian rulers ».

Everywhere in Italy, however, the result of the Austrian policy was the same — to augment the ranks of the liberals and to quicken their hatred

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(1) The rapid march of the Austrian army upon Naples had been accomplished with the aid of Prussian gold. This fact has generally passed unobserved by historians. Today it is of special interest as one of the many events in the past century which show how well the Prussian and the Austrian have understood their close community of interest in the suppression of all liberal tendencies and in the support of autocratic government.

of the foreign oppressor and of the autocrat. Austria had believed that she would be able to completely eradicate secret societies from the peninsula, but when she had done her utmost, she found that she had only consolidated national sentiment, and that the Italian nation had become little less than one vast secret society, sworn to resist all attempts at *Germanization*, and at the first opportunity to drive her back beyond the Alps. The Italian watchword had become: « Away with the Barbarians ! » « Death to the Germans ! » (1).

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The first great political conflict in Europe which seemed to offer a chance of success for a simultaneous national rising against Austria in Italy, was the revolutionary movement which swept over the continent in 1848. Violent outbreaks against the government in Hungary and even in Vienna itself, compromised the very existence of the Empire. Milan, the headquarters of Austrian domination in the Lombardo-Veneto, was the first Italian city to seize the opportunity and to rise against « the Germans ». The prohibition against the private possession of fire-arms had long been in force, and in consequence the Milan insurgents could command but six hundred muskets and shot-guns with which to oppose the Austrian garrison of twelve thousand troops, fully equipped, well furnished with artillery and commanded by

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(1) In Italy the Austrians were commonly termed « The Germans ! »

Austria's greatest soldier, Field-Marshal Radetzky. But such was the audacity and exasperation of the citizens after decades of suffering and humiliation that after five days of ferocious fighting at the barricades Radetzky withdrew his troops from the heroic city and fell back upon the fortresses of the Quadrilateral. The epic struggle is known in history as the Five Glorious Days of Milan.

Venice immediately followed the example of Milan, and after expelling the Austrian garrison prepared to maintain her boldly acquired liberty; the spirit of the Dandolo seemed reincarnated in the patriotic figures of Daniele Manin and Tommaseo, and the Queen of the Adriatic, though stricken with cholera and deprived of food and ammunition, decreed with unanimity « resistance against Austria at any cost », defending herself unaided against overwhelming forces for seventeen months. The peoples of Parma, Modena, Tuscany and the two Sicilies were equally aroused and either drove their rulers, the minions of Austria, from their thrones, or forced them to grant liberal institutions and constitutional government; a republic was proclaimed in the Papal States; and the King of Sardinia at the head of his army marched into Lombardy to support the revolutionists.

But the hour of Italy's final liberation had not yet sounded. Sectional jealousies prevented the different parts of the country from working together as a whole; party hatred ran high and the patriots were divided — there were unitarian

monarchists, federalists and republicans. The failure of the revolutions in Vienna and in Hungary left Austria free to pour her armies into Italy, and her dominion there was soon restored with blood and iron.

Austrian methods were too well known in the Lombardo-Veneto for the revolutionists to have expected clemency upon the return of their oppressors. Murder and rape are common enough in the history of most invasions. But that Austrian troops in their struggles with the revolutionists should burn their victims alive soaked in turpentine or bury them alive in quick-lime, or that children should be crucified, was not altogether to have been expected. (1) Students of history outside of Italy have laid little emphasis in the past upon these Austrian atrocities perpetrated upon Italians, for those of us who have believed in the progress of humanity and of civilization have said to ourselves that such acts must have been exceptional and have represented only individual cases of barbarity, and that certainly they belonged to the past and were devoid of actuality. Only the barbarities committed in Belgium and in France in 1914 by Austria's worthy disciple and ally could awaken us to our error, and to the conviction that the German is always equal to himself — in a certain state of mind he behaves after his kind.

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(1) Vittorio Ottolini, *La rivoluzione lombarda del 1848 e 1849*. Milano. Ulrico Hoepli, 1887, p. 469. — Emilio Dandolo, *I volontari ed i bersaglieri lombardi*, Torino, Ferrero e Franco, aprile 1849, p. 24.



**H. E. Baron Sonnino**  
**Minister for Foreign Affairs.**



**Generals Cadorna and Porro with their staff.**



General Haynau's report upon the storming of Brescia was characteristic; « I employed the *extreme arguments* of war, giving orders that no more prisoners should be taken, that all combatants found with arms in their hands should be slaughtered, and that all houses from which resistance was offered should be burned and razed to the ground ». On November 4, 1849 Field-Marshal Radetzky wrote to his son-in-law: « The Italians have never loved us Germans and never will love us, but persuaded of the inutility of resistance they have surrendered, and we are avenged » (1).

The Field-Marshal understood at last. Difficult as it was for the Austrian mentality to comprehend, he and his kind have never been, are not, and never will be « loved by the Italians ».

In the first year of the restoration, from August 6, 1848 to August 9, 1849 the execution of 961 sentences of capital punishment in the Lombardo-Veneto were reported in the official journals of Austria. The charges upon which the death-penalty was inflicted were various. One man had been found with arms in his possession, another had aided in the liberation of one who had been arrested, another had furnished citizen's clothing to a soldier who wished to desert, another carried a dagger. For the most trivial offences also, men, women and children were condemned to be flogged — for patriotic songs, for conversations

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(1) Ottolini, *idem*, p. 467, Radetzky, *Briefe an seine Tochter*, Wien, Josef Roller und Comp., 1892, p. 96.

hostile to the government, for applauding, for hissing; two girls, one aged 20 years, the other 18, were condemned to forty strokes each, for having laughed during a demonstration — one of the girls went mad shortly after (1). *L'Italia del Popolo* of Lausanne estimated the total number of those condemned for political crimes in the Lombardo-Veneto in two years, April 1849 to April 1851, at over 4,000.

But the crowning infamy of Austrian domination in Italy was the shameful trial of the martyrs of Belfiore. One hundred and twenty-seven arrests were effected between July 1851 and the end of 1852, the victims being charged with complicity in a conspiracy which centered in Mantova; of these, ten found death on the gallows and forty received milder sentences. The torments suffered during the trial were beyond description. The statement of one prisoner of this period will suffice to throw light upon Austrian judicial procedure. After having been kept for thirty days on bread and water, I received, said Giovanni Cervieri, « twenty strokes of the rod on January 20, 1854, thirty more on the 31st, ten more on February 21st, ten more on the 22d, and when on February 23d, preparation was made to flog me again, exhausted by hunger, pain and fever, I was unable to resist such torture further », and begged for a respite. I obtained it, but was « told that even though I were to die under the rod, this

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(1) Ottolini, *idem*, pp. 655, 660.

treatment would be continued until I had confessed my guilt » (1).

Coffins were denied the bodies of those who suffered capital punishment, and the corpses were buried in unconsecrated ground. Tito Speri had been one of the leading patriots; the bill for the expenses of his execution, including the cost of the rope with which he was hanged, was presented to his mother for payment after his death (2).

\* \* \*

Such was the civilization of Austria in the nineteenth century as shown forth in her domination of Italy.

The war of 1859 freed Lombardy, and the war of 1866 liberated the greater part of the Veneto, but the premature peace of 1866, brought about through Prussia's disloyalty to Italy, left several Italian provinces still under the despotic rule of Austria. *Latter day conditions in these unfortunate, unredeemed provinces, as depicted in the following chapters of this volume, make it clear that Austrian civilization has, indeed, made but little progress in the last half-century.* The martyrdom of the courageous patriots of Belfiore has in recent years been followed by the equally brutal martyrdom of equally noble and devoted sons of Italy, in Trieste, Trent and other unredeemed Italian territory.

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(1) Alessandro Luzio, *I martiri di Belfiore*, Milano, L. F. Cogliati, 1908, pp. 149, 325.

(2) Angelo Rubagotti, *Le ultime lettere di Tito Speri*, Roma, D. Ripamonti, 1887, p. 29.

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Those who are familiar with the historic events described in the preceding pages will understand why it was that in 1914, German horrors in Belgium created a deeper impression in Italy than upon any other neutral people in Europe. Belgium in 1914 brought back the vivid recollection of Italy's own martyrdom under the Teuton, and hastened the nation's response to the agonized cry of the Italian provinces of Austria which were still calling for their redemption.

And today martyred Belgium, together with all nations who abhor the methods of her brutal Teuton oppressor, will join Italy in her demand that justice at last be meted out to all the Huns, Germans and Austrians alike, and will echo the fiery words of the last martyr of Belfiore, Pietro Fortunato Calvi; the sentence of death had been pronounced upon him for the crime of patriotism in 1855, and Calvi was asked whether he wished to petition for pardon: « I hate », he replied, as he calmly and defiantly prepared to be led to the scaffold, « I hate, and shall continue to hate the Austrians while there is breath in my body, because of the great wrongs which they have done Italy » (1).

H. NELSON GAY.

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(1) *Libero Benedetti, P. F. Calvi, Pieve di Cadore, Ernesto Berengan, 1905, p. 151.*

## CHAPTER II.

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### ITALIAN MARTYROLOGY IN THE UNREDEEMED PROVINCES SINCE 1866.

**N**one of the numerous peoples of which the Austro-Hungarian Empire is composed have been harrassed and martyred more than the Italians. While in Austria-Hungary certain nationalities have, in fact, been favoured in their economic and political development, the Italians have been violently hated and opposed. The aim was to destroy them; and, not being able to massacre them by the same methods as those adopted by the Turks in Armenia, efforts were made to cause them to disappear under the wave of other more numerous nationalities; the Germans poured down upon the Italians on the Upper Adige, the Slavs and Croatians upon those of Eastern Friuli, of Trieste, of Istria, of Fiume and of Dalmatia. In this way Austria-Hungary hoped radically to alter the real facts; that is, to change those lands which were Italian by origin, by history, by tradition, by civil-

ization, by language, by geographic laws, into German and Slav lands; and to be able thus to defeat Italy's ultimate efforts at revendication.

In 1866, with the cession of the Veneto to young United Italy, Austria-Hungary had reserved for herself frontiers of enormous strength such as would not only ensure her safety against any fresh Italian assault, but which would perhaps one day enable her to fall upon Italy and again snatch from her the provinces of the Lombardo-Veneto. So tremendous were these boundaries that they constituted a regular prison for Italy, and led Gladstone to exclaim: « What is Italy doing in that galley? » But Italy could not escape from this galley because the Empire of the Habsburgs was ever ready, from the vantage ground of the Trentino and from the coasts of Dalmatia, to spring at her throat (1).

Many times Austria made preparations for war on Italy's frontier, and provocations were continual — the annexation of Bosnia, the plans for the Balkan railway, the notorious decrees of Hohenlohe against the Italianism of Trieste, the brutal contempt for Italian national sentiment, the deliberate and systematic destruction of the Italian race within the confines of the Empire. The calvary of Italianism in the unredeemed lands is known to all the civilized world; but perhaps less well known is the story of the

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(1) For a more detailed description of the frontiers between Austria and Italy, unjustly delimited at the conclusion of the war of 1866, consult Chapter III.

intrigues, trickery and plotted aggressions and the enforced vassalage, which embittered the Italo-Austrian alliance down to the outbreak of the present war.

Not to go back to times too remote, it is enough to recall the moral indignities inflicted by the Austro-Hungarian ambassador von Mery on the Italian minister for foreign affairs, Marchese di San Giuliano. This von Mery presented himself almost every day at the ministry to demand an explanation of a phrase in a newspaper, of the patriotic sign over a shop, of the dialogue in a play, of the symbols in a picture; almost as though Italy ought to have blotted out, by the treaty of alliance, all her liberty of internal political life.

At Vienna the military authorities were in complete control. The Italian minister for foreign affairs well knew, through the communication of authentic documents from the Italian General Staff, of the conspiracy framed by the Austrian General Staff in 1911. The Austrian commander in chief, Conrad (this fact was denounced by the Prime Minister Salandra in his famous speech on the Capitol), in agreement with the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne, declared the expediency of annihilating Italy, (which was then engaged in the war in Tripoli) under the pretext that she was making ready to desert the alliance and to seize her unredeemed provinces, and that she was constantly working to hinder all Austria's efforts at development in the Balkans.

Previously Archduke Francis Ferdinand, in the days following the occupation of Bosnia, had

planned to assume the command of the armies against Servia. He was dissuaded by Conrad in these words: « You ought to be the leader in the war against Italy ».

In a military report, written in hatred of Italy by General Conrad, this regretful phrase has been found: « Oh, why was I not listened to when I proposed to attack Italy in 1908! » In fact on another occasion Conrad had meditated the invasion of the Veneto and Lombardy, namely when the Italian nation was overwhelmed by the terrible Messina earthquake, and was mourning thousands upon thousands of dead and the destruction of many prosperous cities.

So bitter was General Conrad, right hand of the Crown Prince, against Italy that Baron von Aehrenthal, when the time approached for the expiration of the Triple Alliance in 1912 felt constrained to retire him for the time being. But as soon as the alliance was renewed, the Austrian government recalled him to his post, almost as if to intimidate the Italians.

Austria-Hungary, in fact, was premeditating the famous decrees of Hohenlohe. At this period, also on account of the differences which had arisen between Austria and Italy at Durazzo and over the conduct of Albanian affairs, the relations between the two allies were not a little strained. At the convention of Abbazia, Count Berchtold recognised the gravity of the problem of the Italian unredeemed lands and of their inhabitants, Italians although still subjects of Austria-Hungary. but he declared it to be an evil



without remedy. An Austrian military journal, the « *Armee Zeitung* », famous for its ferocious campaign against Italy, declared upon that occasion « that it was necessary to destroy the Italians subject to Austria, for supreme strategic reasons, namely in order to avoid finding faithless elements at one's back in the day when Austria should declare war upon Italy ».

From 1866 onwards Austria has planned and acted with but one aim: to destroy the Italians shut up within her confines so as to be more free to attack her eternal enemy — Italy!

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From 1849 to 1851 Austria raised the gallows in Lombardy quite 632 times! The martyrs were all guilty of « political crimes »; that is, of wishing that their own country should be free and not defiled by a barbarous foreign domination.

From 1866 to 1917 Austria has set up the gallows for her foreign subjects only six times. This would seem to mark an improvement in the civilization of this decrepit and anachronistic Empire; but since 1866 the gallows has not been the sole instrument of death made use of by the Austro-Hungarian executioners. Furthermore those who have been executed, have at least ceased to suffer; but those who live under a bitter yoke, in the most debasing slavery, are perhaps yet more to be pitied!

This slavery has been the lot of the Italians of the regions of the Adige, of the Julian Veneto, of Fiume, of Dalmatia. Deprived of schools, forced

to work against their own Italian native land, banished from their province whenever suspected of nourishing Italian sentiments, they have endured for many long years a real martyrdom. Often their goods were confiscated; for a gesture, a letter, an imprudent phrase they were arrested, tried, condemned for high treason, forced to fly into exile or to pass long years shut up in infernal prisons and fortresses. And their greatest torment was to be obliged to hide their true national sentiments and their true aspirations.

A tremendous instrument in the war waged in the past against the Italians subject to Austria has been the Croatian. Hatred against Italians has for many decades been artfully stimulated in the Croats, and the latter have waged a fierce war of suppression and violence against the Italians of the Julian Veneto, of Fiume and of Dalmatia, revealing themselves, as ever, faithful servants of the House of the Habsburgs, worthy of the traditions handed down to them by their forefathers. At Spalato, a city of Italian Dalmatia, the Dalmatian poet Arturo Colautti, who publicly defended the rights of his fellow-citizens and of his country against these intruders who were egged on by the Austrian government, was assualted at night by four Croatian officers, knocked down and sabred. Although left for dead, he miraculously recovered, and had to escape into free Italy, where he died in 1915 invoking the liberty of his country,

To the sentiments of pure Italianism maintained unaltered, in spite of persecutions and mar-

tyrdom, by the unredeemed Italians, how have the Italians of the kingdom of Italy responded? They have responded by hoping in silence and awaiting the hour of the present war of liberation. Today, unanimously, they demand that all the Italian lands subject to Austria-Hungary, and sanctified by so much blood and suffering, be finally reunited to the Mother Country.

This sentiment has not, however, always been equally keen. After the signing of the treaty of the Triple Alliance, while grave and serious controversies were arising between Italy and France, it seemed for a moment that the thought and love of the Italians had changed its direction. It was then that one of the « unredeemed » recalled Italy to her duty by the sacrifice of his own life. This unredeemed Italian died for his true country on the gallows, knitting together the new and the old Italian martyrologies. His name was Guglielmo Oberdan.

Guglielmo Oberdan of Trieste was very young when the Austrian government recalled him from Vienna, where he was studying, to enrol him in a Triestine regiment, the « Weber Regiment 22 », which was to take the field against Bosnia-Herzegovina. He wore for some days the *hated uniform*, but then deserted and escaped to Italy, after having sent back his uniform and bayonet to his colonel with these words: « My blood is not for you! »

Arrived in Italy, he stayed for some time in Ancona, where he prepared one of the nuclei of volunteers who were to have invaded Istria and

Dalmatia under the guidance of Giuseppe Garibaldi. Then he went on to Rome, where he decided to continue his studies.

Guglielmo Oberdan arrived at Rome just in that sad period of desertion and forgetfulness of the « unredeemed » which provoked the anger of all good patriots. He immediately sought to defend the cause of Trent and Trieste and to recall the Italians to their plans of revendication. But from 1879 to 1882 the cause of the « unredeemed » showed only a slow disheartening decline. Then in 1882 the signature of the Italian government was affixed to the first treaty of the Triple Alliance, which seemed the burial of the hopes of those who desired to see completed the unity of the Mother Country. In May 1882, thirteen days after the signing of the treaty, died Giuseppe Garibaldi, who, two months previously, had issued from Naples the following proclamation: « I shall be with you in this last war against Austria; if I cannot walk I shall come in a carriage; or I will have myself tied upon a horse ».

Then Guglielmo Oberdan decided to sacrifice his life on the altar of the nation. He said to his friends: « If one of us Triestines should vow himself to death, perhaps the question of Trent and Trieste would come up again, perhaps the vindicators would arise ». He wished to fling his dead body between the Emperor and Italy. And he flung it.

In September of 1882 the Emperor of Austria was to visit Trieste with his family. Oberdan believed that the propitious occasion had arrived.

He set out with two bombs, and with one companion, to provoke an insurrection at Trieste and in Istria. But he had scarcely passed the confines, at Versa, a place now recovered by the Italian troops, when he was discovered and arrested. Two days after he was transferred to Trieste, which he reached whilst the Emperor, surrounded by whole regiments of gendarmes and soldiers, was making his entry into the utterly deserted city. The trial was very rapid. On October 20 Guglielmo Oberdan was condemned to death.

On December 20, 1882, in the great barracks of Trieste, the young martyr was gibbeted by the hangman. Serene and tranquil, before dying he cried to his executioners and the executioners of his city: « I die exultant because I hope that my death will shortly aid in reuniting my dear Trieste to the Mother Country ! » and he added, when he already had the noose about his neck, « Viva Trieste libera, Viva l'Italia, viva l'It... !! » (Long live free Trieste, long live Italy, long live It... !).

The body struggled in the last agony for about seven minutes; so long that some of the soldiers present fainted. A pardon for the martyr had been asked from the Emperor Francis Joseph, by the great French poet, Victor Hugo, and had been refused. The Emperor, in fact, made the mother of Oberdan pay the price of the rope which had served to hang her son !

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With the martyrdom of Guglielmo Oberdan there was kindled again in Italy the passionate

desire for the completion of the national unity. The existence of the Triple Alliance prevented this patriotic sentiment from openly declaring itself; but the secret bonds between Italy and her unredeemed provinces were close and continuous. Thus, no sooner did the great European conflict break out, with the possibility of an Italian intervention against the Central Empires, than from the Upper Adige, and the Trentino, from the region of Gorizia, from Trieste, from Istria, from Fiume and from Dalmatia, there was a rush of thousands of loving sons who came to offer their services to the Mother Country. And those who could not escape, who could not take refuge in Italy, were imprisoned, and sent to the concentration camps; or they were incorporated in the Austrian army, and driven to fight against Russia. Many thousands of these latter deserted; and now, a few at a time, braving the dangers of the long journey, they too come into Italy and beg to fight against the barbarous oppressor.

These « irredenti » know that they run the gravest risks: because, if they are taken prisoners, they are condemned to the gallows. But they are not afraid of death. Indifferent to consequences, they proudly don the Italian uniform, and with sublime heroism are foremost in rushing to the assault on the Alps and on the Carso.

And yet Austria has already made some stern and ferocious examples. The « irredenti » of Trent and the Adriatic whom she has captured have all been condemned to death. But these examples, instead of lessening, seem to incite

ever more keenly the fervour of these gallant new sons of Italy. Every day there arrive at the Headquarters of the Italian army requests from Trentines, Istrians, Dalmatians, who beg to be sent to the front.

Every unredeemed region has now had her executions. The Trentino has had Cesare Battisti, Fabio Filzi, Damiano Chiesa; the Julian Veneto, Nazario Sauro; Dalmatia, Francesco Rismondo. All of these lands, together with Fiume, the city of the Quarnaro, have had many combatants who fell in battle while heroically fulfilling their duty, very many wounded and mutilated, and many who have been decorated with gold and silver medals for military valour. Honour to them!

The name of Cesare Battisti is known throughout the world, as are those of Miss Cavell and of Captain Fryatt. He was a socialist deputy of the wholly Italian city of Trent. Having escaped into Italy in the summer of 1914, he took part in the campaign for intervention on the side of the Entente, and against the Central Empires. Scarcely had Italy entered into the war before he asked to be enrolled in the corps of Alpini, and, with the rank of lieutenant, soon went into action, showing himself possessed of a calm and intrepid spirit. On July 10, 1916, in a terrible battle on the summit of Monte Corno, he was taken prisoner. The Commander of the Fifth Italian Army Corps, in awarding to the hero the silver medal after his death, thus describes his last acts: « A constant « example of radiant military valour; on July 10,

« after having led the first company to the attack.  
« surrounded by the enemy who were in superior  
« force, he resisted with a few *Alpini* to the last.  
« Left alone, he had the uncertain choice between  
« saving himself by turning his back on the enemy,  
« and almost certain martyrdom; he chose mar-  
« tyrdom ».

Wounded and taken prisoner, Cesare Battisti was taken to Trent, where he was immediately condemned to death. Wounded, he was led to execution tied by the hands to the tail of a horse, and was loaded with insults and spat upon by the Croatian and Tyrolese soldiers of the Emperor. He was hanged in the moat of the Castello del Buon Consiglio of Trent. When his last wishes were asked, he replied: « I wish that these and our other provinces may be restored to Italy ». While they were fastening the halter round his neck he cried: « Death to Austria! Long live Italy! » The weight of his body broke the cord the first time. Still living, he was again lifted up, and found the strength to cry again, « Death to Austria! Long live Italy! » A second new cord having been prepared, he was finally strangled.

Together with Cesare Battisti was hanged Fabio Filzi of Rovereto, his pupil, who was first forced by the executioners to be present at the execution of his master.

Damiano Chiesa was not hanged, he was shot. Having been made prisoner, he too was taken to the Castle of Trent, recognized, insulted, and spat upon, by the Austrian officers. On May 18, 1916, at 7 in the evening, he was executed. Three





**Cesare Battisti led to the scaffold.**



TRENTO - Monument to Dante.

gun-barrels were pointed at his breast and three at his head. They were hardly fifty centimetres from the body of the martyr, so that he was obliged to fix his eyes upon the muzzles pointed against him: « His appearance », relates an eyewitness, « was serene, his manner almost indifferent. In his gaze there was an iron calm ». He too died with the name of adored Italy on his lips.

Nazario Sauro represents for the Italians the Adriatic hero. A native of Capodistria, devotedly Italian, he fled to Venice as soon as the European war broke out. A valiant naval captain, on May 24, 1915, he commanded the first naval action against Austria, and at Porto Buso captured the first Austrian prisoners. He took part in forty-nine sea missions, landing on the Austrian coast, and piloting submarines and torpedoes. Having fallen into the hands of the Austrians he was barbarously hanged at Pola. An appalling description of his death has been given by the Hon. Salvatore Barzilai, ex-minister and republican deputy, before the Italian Chamber:

« Sauro defies the halter, (said the Hon. Barzilai), but knows the rules of the court, and to the « bully who interrogates him, will not yield an « easy victory. Sauro resolutely denies his identity. But captain Jeroovich of the steamer *Bucovina*, who had been at Pola for many months, « and the captain of the steamer *Anfitrite* recognized him, and their testimony had great « weight. Sauro, however, continued to deny. The « military authorities then thought of bringing to

« Pola from Graz, where they were interned, the mother and sister of Sauro; they denied that they recognized a member of their family in the prisoner. As, however, the Austrians felt convinced that they had in their hands Captain Nazario Sauro himself, they put his old mother to the torture so as to wring from her the confession that the prisoner was her son ».

The gallows was set up in the courtyard of the Arsenal of Pola. It was Friday, August 18, the birthday of the Emperor Francis Joseph. The mother and sister were obliged to be present at the execution, and the doors were thrown open so that a crowd should be present. Captain Sauro, before mounting the scaffold, cried three times in a loud voice, « Death to Austria! Long live Italy! » The executioner, says the Austrian account, had much trouble in cutting off that robust life.

Francesco Rismondo, a Dalmatian of Spalato, was a humbler figure than those already mentioned. He was neither writer, nor politician, nor ship's captain. He had dedicated all his life to sport; but even into this he poured the flame of the Italianism which was in his heart, and used it to keep firm the links between his country and the opposite coast of the Adriatic. A few days before the outbreak of the Italian war Francesco Rismondo succeeded in escaping from Spalato and took refuge at Venice. On June 16, 1915 he was already at Verona in the glorious eighth regiment of the Bersaglieri. On July 21 he won the medal for military valour in an epic assault on Monte

San Michele on the way to Trieste. From that day, however, he disappeared. And it was afterwards known that he had been taken prisoner. Although wounded, he was hanged by the executioner of the Habsburgs. Hanged, and, some say, burned while yet alive, through the refined cruelty of his hated oppressors !

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Thus, through these glorious martyrs each unredeemed region is consecrated anew to the Italianism of its destiny. The blood of Battisti, of Chiesa, of Filzi, sanctifies the lands of the Trentino and of the Adige; the blood of Oberdan and of Sauro the Adriatic regions as far as the Quarnero; the blood and the ashes of Francesco Rismondo, Dalmatia, which suffers and waits. In the name of these heroic, dead, of these glorious sons, Italy now demands the security of her confines, the safety of her race and of her civilization. Together with them, and echoing their last shout before the executioner, all Italians cry in concord, « Death to Austria ! Long live Italy ! »



**PART II**

# Italy's National Aspirations

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## CHAPTER III.

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### THE IDEAL AND POLITICAL REASONS OF THE ITALIAN WAR

**T**he generous people of the North American Republic, who have spontaneously entered on the gigantic European struggle by the side of the Allies, are now in a psychological condition which enables them better than any other nation to understand and to appreciate the ideal reasons which, more than two years ago, in May 1915, induced Italy to embark voluntarily on this war.

Both in the case of Italy and in that of the United States of America, the reasons which persuaded the people to go to war were above all, ideal reasons. They may be summed up in the desire which the two nations had in common of contributing to the triumph of Right and Justice over the Central Empires, which consider Might as synonymous with Right. The military philosophy of the Austro-Germans openly proclaimed that whoever possesses the necessary strength to

subjugate others, is also entitled to do so without committing any injustice. But this monstrous conception aroused the indignation of all civilized peoples; from this point of view, whoever understands the motives of the United States in entering the war, likewise understands the reasons that determined Italy to cast in her lot with the Allies.

But considered from a political point of view, the two historical facts, namely the Italian intervention in 1915 and the American intervention in 1917, proceeded from different causes; and the people of the United States of America, in order to fully understand the significance of Italy's participation in the world war, must acquaint themselves at least summarily, with the political events which determined it, also because these events illustrate and facilitate the comprehension of those ideal reasons which are at one with her national aspirations.

Italy, as a united nation with Rome as its capital, counts hardly half a century of existence. Her unification was the result of several decades of heroic struggle, of glorious battles stubbornly fought by her sons who gave their lives for their country's liberty, either in the field or at the hands of the hangman on an Austrian scaffold. Sixty years ago Austria occupied five provinces which history and geography, besides the civilization, language and will of the inhabitants, clearly indicated as belonging to Italy — namely Lombardy, Venetia, the Trentino, Julian Venetia and Dalmatia. In 1859, with the help of

France, Lombardy was liberated and restored to Italy, and in 1866 Venetia followed suit. There remained and still continue to remain, in great part under Austrian rule the three other provinces, in which Austria, during the last fifty years has spared neither government intrigues nor police violence in order to suppress the Italian nationality.

The first years of the young kingdom were very difficult. Foreign rule and domination had left the seeds of great evils which had to be remedied, and jealousies soon cropped up abroad against the latest comer in the society of European States. Nor were the very nations who had helped in the resurrection of Italy, free from this jealousy. Italy soon found herself perilously isolated; disliked by France, because on the road to Rome Italian soldiers had had to fight against French soldiers who defended the Temporal Power of the Pope; hated by Austria, who wished to reconquer the two Italian provinces she had lost; she was also regarded with suspicion by Germany, who could not forgive the Italian government for not having prevented Garibaldi's generous move in fighting for France against Prussia in 1871. But more threatening than all was Austria's attitude, owing to the fact that she was firmly established on the Italian Alps and held such commanding and strategically favourable positions as to expose Italy to the constant danger of losing, from one moment to the other, in the event of an attack, the fruits of long years of hard-fought battles for her lib-

erty and independence. Being weak and surrounded by powerful and hostile neighbours, Italy, in order to tide over the most critical years of her national existence, was forced to emerge from her isolation and began to look about for allies. Abandoned by France, owing to Bismarck's perfidious diplomacy, Italy had no other course left but to enter as a third partner in the alliance which Austria and Germany had concluded in 1879. It must be remembered that at that time England also, who always remained on the friendliest of terms with Italy, inclined towards the Central Empires.

The alliance which Italy concluded with Germany and Austria in 1882 (called the *Triple Alliance*), was accepted by the majority of the Italians as a hard and painful necessity. The natural aversion against Austria, fed by the memory of past oppression, the consciousness of national unity as yet not entirely completed, the humiliations inflicted by the two powerful allies, who systematically snubbed Italy and treated her as a « poor relation », always prevented the alliance from becoming popular. But it was the only way to ensure peace; above all it was the only means of preventing a declaration of war on the part of Austria.

On several occasions, despite the extreme prudence of the Italian government, the relations between Italy and Austria had become perilously strained. Austria, not content with the great advantage which her strategic frontiers gave her, entirely to the detriment of Italy, fortified the Trentino with evidently offensive intentions.

Such was Italy's situation in Europe and in the Triple Alliance when Austria, by her *ultimatum* to little Serbia, provoked, through her own fault and that of Germany, the present world war.

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Wholly absorbed by her internal problems, Italy had not even considered the possibility of a general conflagration and was quite unprepared for it. She was intent on healing the wounds inflicted during many years of foreign domination, very far from thinking of war, and consequently from a military point of view she was the least prepared of all the Great Powers. Relations with Austria were always more or less strained, but those with Germany could not be considered as wholly bad. German industry had succeeded in penetrating throughout the country and in dexterously imposing itself on the Italian markets. There cannot be the slightest doubt that this industrial penetration formed part of Germany's hegemonic plans, but nobody suspected it, and consequently it caused no alarm; and the important business relations which the German Empire had succeeded in establishing, assumed the appearance of a friendly Italo-German collaboration. The same applies to the field of learning and culture; Italians went to Germany in order to study and sometimes also to teach, while Italy was full of German students, and not a few German professors taught in the Italian Universities.

In spite of all this, the cry of indignation which echoed from one end of the Peninsula to the

other, from the Alps to Sicily, when Germany invaded Belgium and hurled herself implacably against France, marching with the flower of her formidable armies upon Paris, was even louder and more deeply and unanimously felt than the one which issued from every Italian breast on the day of Austria's declaration of war against Servia. The sentiment of justice was stronger than any other sentiment.

The Italians were too healthy and honest a people to remain quietly indifferent before what was happening. The thought of the wrongs which France had done to Italy could not cancel the grateful memory of her generous collaboration towards Italian independence. But even if there had been no debt of gratitude in that direction, everybody would equally have felt that a German conquest of Paris might mean the beginning of the end of Latin civilization in Europe and in the whole world; and of this civilization the Italian people had been the founder and the apostle. Italy felt that, defending France, she was not only paying a debt of gratitude, but also defending part of her own spiritual existence.

Both the people and the government felt this. And, in those first anxious and tumultuous moments, when there was nothing else for her to do, she immediately separated her own responsibility from that of her allies. She declared that the *Triple Alliance* was a pact signed with exclusively defensive purposes and that it could not bind any of the parties to complicity in an aggression.

Moreover, Italy proclaimed her neutrality and

withdrew her troops from the western Alps on the French frontier.

This measure, adopted with prompt resolution, proved at that critical moment the salvation of Europe. For it enabled France in her turn to withdraw the troops which guarded the Alps against an eventual attack on the part of Italy, « the ally of Austria and Germany », and to launch them on the immortal fields where the miracle of the Marne was performed.

Italy did this, acting from a spontaneous impulse, without calculating the advantage which she might derive from the situation which rendered her, alone among the great European Powers, absolutely free to decide in favour of one or the other group of belligerents, making her the arbiter of their fates. She neither calculated nor bargained. All negotiations require time, while at that moment a single day's delay might have been fatal. Italy did not stop to bargain and argue, but she acted; her action was voluntary and the motives which guided her were by no means altogether selfish; for her « sacred national egoism », although always legitimate when it coincides with the cause of civilization and justice, and especially comprehensible in a people who had had so much to suffer in the past from the undeserved hostility of other nations, was in reality nothing but a « diplomatic formula ». And we will not hesitate to say that this formula was necessary in the first months of the conflict, when Italy, both in her own interest and in that of her present allies, could not with safety reveal her intended plan of action.

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It may be said, however, that the course adopted ten months later had already been decided upon from the very beginning. It became immediately obvious to the best and most intelligent part of the nation that so timely a declaration of neutrality could not possibly be an end in itself. But this very persuasion gave rise to many an anxious doubt and to much perturbation of spirit.

The *Triplíce* was a paradoxical alliance, the sole means of preventing war, and now war had broken out. Italy had entered into the Triple Alliance and had remained there against her will; she had never been able to discuss her own needs and aspirations and had been obliged to accept all the conditions which her truculent partners chose to dictate. Bismarck, who had conceived and engineered the compact, had succeeded in bringing the diplomatic deal through and in drawing Italy within the orbit of the Central Powers solely by means of blackmail and bullying. All this was true; but the clauses of the treaty remained secret, and it was only known that they did not bind Italy to march by the side of her allies in the event of a war in which the latter would be the attacking parties. And in this state of doubt and uncertainty many asked themselves whether the pact might not really be of so binding a nature as to render its dissolution impossible without detriment to the national traditions of honour and loyalty. From the Italian point of view, a treaty, however infamous, could



never be regarded, according to the expression of the German Chancellor, as « a piece of waste paper ».

When the exact text of the agreement was finally published it was an immense satisfaction to the Italian people, for they learned, to their infinite relief, that not only were there no clauses irremediably binding Italy to the Central Empires, but that the latter had not fulfilled their obligations to Italy.

The purely defensive character of the Triple Alliance was clearly confirmed by the publication of Articles III and IV of the treaty, regarding the mutual obligations of the allies in the event of a war embarked upon by one or two of the contracting Powers.

We give a literal translation of the exact text of the two clauses in question :

Article III. — « If one or two of the contracting Powers, without any direct provocation on their part, should be attacked by, or find themselves involved in a war against, two or more Great Powers who have not signed the present treaty, the *casus foederis* will simultaneously be held binding for all the other signatory Powers ».

Article IV. — « Should a Great Power who is not a party to the present treaty threaten the security of the States of one of the contracting Powers, and the Power thus menaced find itself under the necessity of declaring war, the remaining two allied Powers bind themselves to a benevolent neutrality in respect to their ally. Each of the allies reserves the right, in said case, to

take part in the war, if it should consider it opportune, in order to make common cause with the belligerent ally ».

Furthermore, Article VII of the treaty, which has also been published, provided that absolutely no territorial change should be allowed in the Balkan peninsula without the reciprocal consent of the Powers interested, namely of Austria and Italy. But by her attack upon Serbia in 1914, Austria not only acted against the interests of her Italian ally, but deliberately violated the pledges of the Alliance, thereby wittingly annulling it (1). As Germany to Belgium, so Austria to Serbia, made it clear that her valuation of treaties was based upon the theory of the *chiffons de papiers*. The Italian government accordingly felt not only that she had the right, but that she was in duty bound, to consider herself freed from every pledge, and to act as the interests of the nation and of civilization should demand.

One duty she had already performed by withholding her solidarity from the cause of the aggressors; another and even higher duty she was preparing to fulfil, with a soul ready to bear every sacrifice and every suffering in a just cause.

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In order to accomplish this second and most important duty, Italy set about improvising what

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(1) Austria's betrayal of Italy has been strikingly revealed by the Italian ex-minister for foreign affairs, senator Tommaso Tittoni, in his volume, *Who was responsible for the war? The verdict of history*. Paris, Bloud et Gay, 1917.



**TRENTO - Cathedral.**



**GORIZIA - The lion of St. Mark.**



TRIESTE ■ San Giusto.

she did not possess, namely an immense army fully equipped. The war had been a frightful, a monstrous revelation, a clash of new and terrible instruments of destruction. There were millions of stalwart men and stout hearts ready to hand, and Italy got to work on the manufacture of cannon and ammunition with magnificent energy, improvising the war industries which were almost non-existent.

But Germany and Austria-Hungary had secured a long start in the race for victory, having been assiduously engaged on the work of war preparation for full forty years. How was it possible to catch up with them in so perilously short a time? Diplomacy tried to gain time by long-winded discussions and complicated negotiations, but the people were impatient and could no longer brook the slightest delay, which to its impulsive generosity was as difficult and hard to bear as the sting of remorse. Hundreds of young Italians, led by a grandson of Garibaldi, went to fight in the Argonnes to help drive out the German invader from the soil of France. Many young Italians fought and fell for Servia, and in every army at war against Germany and Austria for the cause of liberty before Italy entered the conflict there were Italian volunteers.

It cannot be denied that also in Italy there were not wanting those who would have preferred the preservation of neutrality at all costs. War is not exactly a pleasant game, so that these prudent and excessively peace-loving people may be found in all countries and in all times. Part of the soc-

ialists declared themselves contrary to the war « on principle », as if their fellow-socialists of the German and Austrian « international » had kept faith to their principle. Other keen opposers of the war were some of those *clients* of Germany who are only too well known to the people of the United States and to other countries which have offered a field for their activities. There was a keen struggle between *interventionists* and *neutralists*; but although everybody knew that the war would be long, hard, and particularly costly because the Italian army would have to fight in dangerous conditions of strategic inferiority, victory crowned the efforts of that large majority of the population which clamoured for a war on the side of the Entente.

And it was a sweeping, most significant victory, so great, indeed, that Italy declared war on Austria even before she was herself ready to fight, only because a further delay might have proved fatal to the cause of her new allies.

In May 1915 not a few expressed the opinion that Italy had intervened late in the conflict only to reap a harvest of cheap laurels. On the contrary it was the most tragic moment, perhaps, in the whole war, when the Russian army was in full retreat dragging after it its artillery rendered useless owing to the lack of munitions. A further delay would have been advantageous and profitable to Italy, but she refused to wait, knowing that the safety of all hung in the balance. Two years later President Wilson, as the spokesman of his country, made use of a singularly felici-

tous expression when he said that the United States, was above all « an individual champion of human right ». The same may be said of Italy, who felt that armed neutrality was insufficient, and that « right was more precious than peace ». And when the time came to make a decision, she set aside all calculations and bargaining. She could have remained an indifferent spectator, but she was not fitted for that rôle. She sprang forward voluntarily to arms, not so much to win back her inheritance as to vindicate all those ideals born of Rome, which through the centuries, had gone to make up the dignity of free men. She determined to pursue her civilizing mission in the world, conscious of still possessing that power which, in the distant past, enabled her to found a great and lasting civilization, and glad that the time had come to reassert her full independence.

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Italy had been forced into the Triple Alliance by sheer necessity; it was a question of life or death, for otherwise she could not have preserved her national independence, bravely won by tenacious and heroic struggles extending over half a century. There was no other way out of the dilemma: either an alliance with Austria or a war against her — an enemy numerically superior, formidably armed and in possession of strategic positions which would enable her to effect the conquest of Lombardy and Venetia in a few weeks.

It is obvious that in these conditions Italy's independence was practically non-existent. In order

to defend itself from foreign aggression, a state must be absolutely free and independent. Italy's only line of defence is on the Alps, and Austria by her firm hold over the Trentino and the Upper Adige, Julian Venetia and Dalmatia, occupied all the natural defences of the nation.

We purposely say *natural defences*, because geography, history and ethnography indicate them as such. Since the time of the Roman Empire, namely for two thousand years at least, the Alps have been considered as Italy's geographical confines. Polybius, one of the most famous historians of the Roman epoch, clearly states that as far back as the year 241 before Christ the name *Italia* was used to designate all the lands extending from the Alps to Sicily. From that remote period up to our own times the conception of Italy's geographical unity remained unchanged despite endless political vicissitudes.

Moreover, the geographical situation is evident to whoever carefully studies a map of northern Italy, however complicated it may appear at first. The frontier line runs along the mountain crests which constitute the water-shed separating the waters which flow into the Danube, and with it into the Black Sea, from those which flow into the Po and the Adriatic.

In order, therefore, to ascertain the natural confines of Italy, it suffices to follow the course of the Italian rivers up to their sources. The frontiers thus formed constitute a magnificent natural bulwark, almost everywhere corresponding perfectly to the ethnographic frontier, which encloses



Italy in a formidable mountain barrier, broken by few passes of difficult access and which a few soldiers would suffice to hold against an invader.

And what was the *political frontier* separating Italy from Austria? The latter, having been obliged to evacuate Venetia after the war of 1866, still held the Trentino, Julian Venetia and Dalmatia, and had at her disposal *thirty* roads of access by which, at whatever time she chose, it was in her power to invade and reoccupy the lost Italian provinces. The Austrian government in 1866 had succeeded in imposing on Italy, with the secret intention of profiting by it at some future favourable occasion, a frontier line which appears traced by an inexplicable caprice. Although totalling a length of 400 kilometres, it coincided with the natural or geographical confines only along 80 kilometres. All the rest of the line had been traced at hap-hazard, running in a tortuous and irregular course from one crest to another, from valley to valley, halving them in an arbitrary manner, isolating townships and villages from all means of communication, forcing roads to take incredible turnings and twistings, cutting up rural property in the most absurd manner, and finally leaving the mountain line to the east in order to cross the Friulan plain and end in the Adriatic.

It would be easy, by a thousand typical examples, to show what was the real value of this frontier line and to what absurd results it gave rise.

For instance, the valley of the Caffaro, in the province of Brescia, was traversed by the boundary line in such a manner that half of the village

of Bagolino was in Austria and half in Italy; another small town, Agordino, was separated by the frontier line from its graveyard; in the Natisone valley certain farms were divided by the frontier in such a manner that the proprietors had to pay taxes to the Italian government for lands placed in Austria and vice-versa; in a Friulan village a farmer even found himself in the strange position of having his house in Italy and his barn and stables in Austria.

After what we have said it is more than evident that Italy was in a most abnormal and dangerous position; the enemy held the keys of her house and she was faced by this dilemma: to either suffer all humiliations in silence, or embark upon a war in conditions of disastrous inferiority.

Nor were Italy's conditions more favourable on the Adriatic. The Italian side of the Adriatic is shallow and sandy, without harbours and without defences from Venice to Brindisi, while the Austrian coast abounds in deep bays and secure harbours protected by over six hundred islands, large and small, between which runs a labyrinth of channels marvellously suited to all the surprises and manoeuvres of modern maritime warfare.

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By a miracle of almost superhuman prowess, the Italian army has succeeded in defeating the Austrians despite the tragically unfavourable strategic conditions in which it entered upon the campaign. But Italy will not be safe from Austrian vengeance and reprisals until her victory and that

of her allies shall have restored to her her natural frontiers; the Italian flag must be planted on the Brenner range (northern boundary of Venezia Tridentina), on the Julian Alps and on the Dinaric Alps, from which positions alone is it possible to defend the Adriatic.

And as Italy will not be able to give the full contribution of her work and of her genius to the cause of civilization without first taking all necessary steps to defend herself against an attack, it is evident that her national revendications are closely connected with that ideal mission for the triumph of Right and Justice which the Italian people voluntarily chose when it embarked upon a terrible war, unmindful of its sacrifices and its sufferings. Should the Italians, falsely interpreting the formula « without annexations and without indemnities » relinquish their claims to the Trentino, Julian Venetia and Dalmatia, they would betray themselves and the cause for the triumph of which they have been shedding their best life-blood for the last two years.

They ardently desire the liberation of their brothers subject to Austrian rule not only because they obey the voice of blood, not only because from Trent and Trieste, from Fiume and the cities of Dalmatia comes a cry of distress and an appeal voiced in their own language, but because they feel that the lives and the freedom of those brethren are their own lives and their own freedom, reflected in the image of the nation. They want to free their brethren because they know by bitter experience that the enslavement

of part of a nation ends in the slavery of the whole country. Italy rebels against any attempt at the deformation of her national being, above all because she is conscious of having a mission of her own to accomplish in the organization of the work of humanity; because she knows that nations can only contribute to the fullness of universal life when they have reached the fullness of their own individual existence. For these reasons, as well as from considerations based on the principle of justice, Italy aims at the elimination of that political monster, the Monarchy of the Habsburgs.

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Italy desires her own full liberty because she wants the liberty of the world. Those who accuse her of imperialistic aims, who reproach her with transgressing the principle of nationality because she claims Dalmatia, where the Italian element has been reduced to a minority by the infamous machinations of the Austrian government, either do not know Italy, or deliberately libel her. Italy loves her own independence too well to undermine that of other peoples.

The principle of nationality offers unquestionable difficulties in its application, but those who admit that Bohemia has the right to frontiers which she can defend, although within those frontiers there live nearly three millions of Germans; those who admit France's claim on Alsace and Lorraine, although only a small portion of the inhabitants of those provinces speak the French language; those who do not insist on France's evacuation of

Corsica and England's abandonment of Malta which are both Italian speaking islands, must also admit that a nation of nearly forty million inhabitants has the right and the duty to reach its natural frontiers even if, within those boundaries, about half a million inhabitants of other nationalities are mingled with the Italian population.

The inland frontiers of geographical Italy are so disposed that they are wonderfully suited for a defensive but not for an offensive action. The solidity of the Alpine frontier is such that Italy will never aspire to continental expansion. Her future lies on the sea. Owing to her geographical conditions and to the temperament of her people, who shrink from every form of injustice and bullying, Italy will always favour by her policy the equilibrium and the multiplication of free states. The diplomatic documents contained in the Italian Green Book, published by the minister for foreign affairs in May 1915, prove, for instance, how much interest Italy has always shown in the political and economic integrity and independence of Servia. A free and powerful Italy, secure within her natural boundaries, no longer obliged to follow a pitifully prudent policy for fear of a sudden attack, no longer humiliated by the spectacle of her emigrants scattered all over the world in search of work like negroes or Chinese, but morally redeemed by her mighty effort and by her generous heroism, cannot but prove a factor of equilibrium, of peace and prosperity in the life of civilized nations.



## CHAPTER IV.

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### THE TRENTINO AND UPPER ADIGE.

**E**very educated man, having learned at school that the clearly circumscribed Italian Peninsula is bounded by the Alps and the sea, knows that a part of it is formed by the basin of the Adige — that great river which irrigates populous valleys in the Venetian region and pours its waters into the Adriatic. That the whole of the Venetian region, with its plains and hills and mountains, with the entire course of its rivers, and thus with both the Trentino and the upper valley of the Adige, is Italian and not German territory, is universally acknowledged. That young and free Italy possesses over these lands of hers full and sacred rights is felt by every free people in the world.

When Lord Palmerston, in his note of 1851, protested against the German Confederation because, asserting a claim to the basin of the Adige, it wanted « to add countries geographically divided from Germany », he first established.

*also diplomatically* in the face of Europe the static principle, « Italy to the Brenner Alps ».

From that time the English political world has been at one with intellectual men of every nation in recognizing the aspirations of the Italians to the complete extension of their country to its natural limits.

And are not the natural limits of Italy the summits of the Alps? Is it possible to think of any other boundary between France and Spain than that of the chain of the Pyrenees? Can one imagine a more natural boundary between Chili and Argentina than that formed by the Andes? God, by means of the eternal outlines of mountains and seas, has marked off the various countries. This sacred truth, which rings in the verses of an Italian poet, holds good for no land more than for Italy.

The Alps, as anyone who has visited Europe remembers, form between Italy and the northern lands a clear and precise division, a mighty wall, a barrier; whoever passes this receives an instantaneous vision, an inerascable impression of two entirely different natures on this side and on that. The great range of mountains divides clearly the Italian region from the adjacent countries.

And the traveller, whether he approach from France, or from Switzerland, or from the German and Slav countries, so soon as he has crossed the Alps, whether by tunnel or under the open sky, and descends swiftly beside the fast-flowing rivers, feels the same certainty in his soul: « This



is Italy ». No sooner do the waters flow to the south than the beloved land discloses and reveals herself in a moment, beautiful as some supernatural vision. These are her vineyards and her flowers, her streams and her perfumes. The mountains rear themselves less loftily, the valleys descend like rays, the hills spread out towards the plain, the plain, infinite and remote, loses itself towards the sea. And from this immense descent, from this flow of a thousand streams and rivers towards the Italian sea, there presents itself before ones eyes as before those of the mind, the unquestionable truth. The whole extent of the Adige is Italian territory, even though from its Alpine source to the hills of Verona the black and yellow banner of the Habsburgs may wave above it.

Italy claims in its *entirety* this Alpine basin of her second largest river, usurped by Austria.

In this magnificent hour of justice the whole civilized world unites in the inflexible purpose of preventing for ever any renewal of brutal barbaric aggression, and in setting strong and just barriers against Germanism. For the attainment of this end Italy requires the essential boundaries assigned to her by nature and by history, by geography and by right. These and no others are the « sacred boundaries » upon which the Italian armies have sworn to plant the country's flag.

And because the unanimous will of the Italians is immutable, and because the common interest of the victorious and avenging Allies is to cut the claws of the German beast, no one can question

that tomorrow all the valleys of the Adige, as far as the Brenner Alps, the Trentino and Upper Adige alike, integral parts of the Venetian region which is an integral part of the Italian peninsula, will be restored to the completed Kingdom of Italy.

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The Trentino and the Upper Adige form an inseparable whole, share a common destiny.

The possession of the Upper Adige and the Trentino meant for the Germans the holding of an enormous foot shod with mountains upon the neck of Italy. It is calculated that the entrenched fortress of Trent, with its numerous offensive works, must have cost Austria not less than a billion (a thousand millions of lire). The enormous mountainous wedge which these lands form in the midst of the Italian plains is on all sides barbed with fortresses, by means of which Austria practically extended her political dominion over the young kingdom, which was rendered almost a vassal, an open prey for the Germanic designs.

It is in the upper valley of the Adige that the centre of all the Austrian military roads, a menace to Italy, is found. Should Austria lose Trent, it would yet have, in the Upper Adige, the dominating stronghold. Should it lose Bolzano, it would yet have in the territory of Bressanone the meeting point of its strategic railways which traverse the Alps at two points (at the Brenner and at Dobbiaco), and would yet be mistress of the Adriatic slope.

In the dawn of the new Liberties, Napoleon, having constituted an Italic kingdom with Milan as capital, gave to it for boundaries the Alps, including Trent and the « Department of the Upper Adige ». And when it came to the matter of defining the frontier, Eugène Beauharnais, the viceroy, declared the only possible political and military confine between the new kingdom and the Germanic states to be that indicated by nature herself, upon the crests of the mountains which separated the waters beyond the Alps from those flowing into the Adriatic.

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When anyone says that the great work of liberating the world does not allow of annexations or conquests, it is essential for those who may speak without exact knowledge, and merely from misapprehended theory, to see clearly upon which side the right is, and whose has been the real usurpation of yesterday or today, since no one certainly could presume to be urging justice who should think of simply accepting the actual state of things as consecrating, to the advantage of the usurpers, the fruits of their ancient and recent oppressions.

To recognize the state of possession of the Germans in the Cisalpine lands, upon the Trentino and the Upper Adige, would be the same as to sanction their bloody conquests in Alsace and in Belgium.

Nelson Gay has very well set forth, in the important American journal, « The Nation », what

are the vital necessities of Italy, determined to recover her frontier, and with it her military safety and her political independence: « Italy », he affirms, « must make her own the inhabitants of twenty thousand square kilometres of country geographically Italian, at present excluded from the nation ».

In addressing the American Senate, the Prince of Udine, head of the Italian mission, indicated as among the aims of Italy, which had entered generously and with determination into the war, « that of correcting her insecure frontiers; since Italy has experienced, more than all the other nations of Europe, the martyrdom of invasion; Italy, to live, has need of her great frontier ». She has need, then, of the entire basin of the Adige, up to the crests of the mountains, up to the line of partition, up to the Brenner.

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To the minds of our friends beyond the mountains and beyond the seas, French, English and American, the just and precise idea of the Trentino and the Upper Adige, as Cisalpine regions of a character essentially Italian, has been clouded by the confusion of the names and of the administrative and political confines; since up to the present time the Trentino and the Upper Adige have been included in the Austrian provinces of the Tyrol.

In publications in the English language, as also in French, and unfortunately in many in Italian, the name commonly in use, comprehensive and

supported by official conditions, has been that of « Tyrol ». Today, for the Italians as well as for the Allied Nations, this name, an artificial expression of an iniquitous state of things which must cease, has no grounds whatsoever for surviving.

The political-administrative unity of the Tyrol, a relatively recent Austrian creation, artificially organized to dominate the principal chain of the Alps, joining in an absolutely unnatural manner Transalpine and Cisalpine regions entirely differing from one another, could not be recognized by the Italians. They contest it. They deny it. They are determined to destroy it entirely, restoring the regions as constituted by nature, by geography and by history.

• There will remain some German regions beyond the Alps — Innsbruck, Linz, Bregenz — and they will have their local names, within their political bounds. On this side of the Alps will remain Italian regions, the Trentino, and the Upper Adige, and they will belong to Italy.

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The Trentino is the southern part of the mountainous basin of the Adige, including the great lateral valleys which are historically connected with Trent (6330 square kilometers). It is the ancient principality of Trent, a land wholly Italian in its geographic situation and its natural aspect, as well as in its language and the sentiment of its inhabitants.

The Upper Adige, which has its centre at Bol-

zano (7200 square kilometers), has on the other hand, undergone a profound German infiltration. By nature, it forms one whole with the Trentino, but ethnically it is unlike. The Germans there, are today numerically in the majority. Even there, however, on the river plain the Italian element is strong, and in the surrounding mountains it remains intact, up to the highest valleys, some of which have remained Italian (Gardena, Badia), so that here again Italy reaches ethnically almost to the foot of the Great Chain.

It would be a gross mistake to suppose that a rough distinction could be drawn between the two regions thus: the Trentino, Italian: the Upper Adige, German. The Trentino is certainly Italian, very Italian, with as great compactness and purity as that of any province of the Kingdom. The official Austrian census gave an amply sufficient proof of the Italianism of the Trentino when it admitted that out of 380,000 inhabitants 370,000 were Italians, and, in a district where there was no Austrian garrison, 999 Italians out of 1000 inhabitants.

The Upper Adige numbers 180,000 Germans or at least there were that number previous to the war; and, beside them, forty of fifty thousand Italians. The Upper Adige, while in position and aspect it also is Italian territory, cannot even be said to be German in language, if a quarter of its population be Italian.

But above all one must understand and keep clearly in mind, that the two regions are by nature indivisible; and then it will be seen that

this mountainous region of the Adige, which has been also called by a common name, « Venezia Tridentina », this region containing 600,000 inhabitants of whom 420,000 are Italian, is, when taken as a whole, *three-quarters Italian, and thus also by nationality belongs by full right to Italy.*

Anyone who should wish to break the unity of these two regions, and seek a dividing line in order to assign to Italy a part and no more, would not be able to find such a dividing line. Above the Trentino the valley of the Adige though of mixed language, counts communes and villages wholly or in great part Italian; strong Italian nuclei are found also between Bolzano and Merano, and even as far up as the highest valley (Valley Venosta); while others lie in the valley of the Isarco, around Bressanone; and in greater part Italian are the populations of the Dolomite territory which lifts its famous mountains between the Trentino and the Pusteria.

Even if numerically inferior, the Italian element in the Upper Adige is so distributed, and has so penetrated into the valleys, as to exclude any possibility of effecting a separation on a linguistic basis, a method of division differing distinctly from that which defines by nature, that is, by the Alps.

After all, the foreign element that Italy will have to absorb here is not a tenth part of that which, in order to regain Alsace and Lorraine, France will bring under her dominion.

History has these fluctuations. There was a time when the Germanic element, in the troubled

centuries of the middle ages, was powerfully diffused in a great part of the Italian Prealps and the Venetian plain. Then the vitality of the Latin people absorbed it or repulsed it, until of this barbarous inundation of the fair fields of Italy nothing remained, or remains today, but the last ripple in some of the highest confluent valleys of the Adige.

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Trent, one of the noblest and fairest of Italian cities (30,000 inhabitants) offers to whoever visits it, clear proof of its Italianism in structure and in art, in speech and in customs. Rovereto and Riva, cities of exquisite Venetian character, and the smaller cities of the Trentino, Ala, Arco, Lévico, Clés, Pérgine, Borgo, Mezzolombardo, Tione, Lavis, Cavalese, Predazzo, show the clean lines of Italian art; and they have the Italian language in the schools and offices, as they have an entirely Italian population, both in the towns, and in the valleys around, even those the most remote. The picturesque Giudicarie, the fertile Valsugana, the ample and populous valleys of Nor and of Fiemme, the more Alpine valleys of Sole and Rendena, of Primiero and of Fassa, give an equal impression of clear and inborn Italianism.

Italy, we know, has full rights in the Trentino, Italian in speech, in art, in feeling. Not only are these rights unanimously recognised in the political circles of the Entente, but we may say, also in those of the Central Empires, they them-



selves being unable to deny the national characteristics of that region which, by an old custom, they call in their language « Welschtirol », that is, the Italian part of the province of the Tyrol.

« Welschtirol » corresponds, in fact, to the « Trentino », but this Italian denomination of the Italian valleys surrounding Trent has never been officially accepted and recognized by Austria, whose government for decades and decades has followed, without scruples, a political course directed towards the *Germanization*, by fraud and violence, of the whole country.

Faithful to their nationality, the Trentini resisted, although weak and alone, with courage, with tenacity, with the force of desperation, at a time when the Italian state, then a party to the Triple Alliance and in reality a vassal of Austria, could not and did not know how to come to their assistance.

Only the National Associations, whose programme is precisely the defence of the Italian language and culture, could lend a hand in the struggle, a fierce and obstinate struggle between unequal forces, a struggle which absorbed and exhausted the best energies of the generous Trentini, forced to neglect even the sources of material prosperity in order to save their great heritage of patriotic sentiment and love of liberty.

How little did the foreigners, who travelled through the country out of curiosity and for recreation, see and know of these things !

The English and Americans travel a great deal, but rather to admire the beauties of nature than

to devote themselves to the study of the present life and customs of the people. Of natural beauties, the Trentino and Upper Adige possess an extraordinary wealth; and very numerous, before the war, were the summer visitors.

But the Germans, untiring organizers of material and social conquests, had known how, by means of a colossal *réclame*, to attract the Anglo-Saxon current particularly to those places prepared by them with every modern comfort and entirely covered with Germanic varnish, giving to the foreigners the impression that German nationality extended from the Brenner to Lake Garda.

This German programme, followed for years with method, with tenacity, and with powerful means, succeeded in easily deceiving the foreigners, who very seldom perceived that the crafty ethnologic-geographic theories of certain English books, bought in London or New York, but printed in Germany, are nothing less than an impudent falsification of the truth. Even English authors, describing these famous Alpine places on the false lines of German literature, do nothing but copy; they have failed to detect, behind the over-ruling Germanism, the ancient and interesting remains of Latinity, in which the Upper Adige abounds. Even for them the Trentino and the Upper Adige are only « Southern Tyrol ».

Now that the war has caused the walls of iniquity to fall, and has opened men's eyes to the plots of the barbarians, it is time that things should be seen by the friends of Italy, as they really are, from the point of view of the natural Latin recon-

quest, and no longer under the veil of official lies and from the point of view of the Austro-German usurpers.

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Not only are the cities and lands of the Trentino wholly Italian in speech and aspect, but an abundant and steadfast Italianism has survived in the Upper Adige, attached to its historic traditions, evident in its topographical impress, vital in its economic and commercial relations. Bolzano, centre and capital of the Upper Adige, a charming and industrious little city of about 20,000 inhabitants, in the depths of a valley where nature boasts the products of the south, where on the sunny slopes amid the olives and cypresses ripen famous wines, still reveals an Italian aspect in the architecture of the old houses, Italian memories in the towers, the castles and the churches, an Italian populace in its « borgos ».

Between Bolzano and Merano, the spacious, straight valley, flanked by high mountains, is girdled by ancient castles with fine Italian outlines. In the Venosta valley the Cisalpine characteristics yet flourish, up to the point where the valley rises to the north, crowned and closed by the lofty central chain; Venosta boasts numerous monuments of the Roman epoch, and it has remained in great part Latin through all the centuries of the middle ages and of modern times, up to within two hundred years of our own time. This German usurpation is too recent in history, for one to be able to recognize in it the justifica-

tion of an accomplished fact. The inhabitants of its western extremity (Valley of Monastero) are yet Latin, and Latin are, in far the greater part, the names of the villages and of the fields.

On the other side of Bolzano, towards the northeast, enters the valley of the Isarco (Eisack), a great tributary river of the Adige; this valley, which was invaded by the German peoples in the middle ages, is gloomy, wild and sparsely inhabited. On the mountains which flank it towards the east - the Gardena - there dwells and resists a strong nucleus of Italians. The mountaineers of the Gardena speak yet an old dialect of Roman origin, which they have known how to preserve affectionately, not only in face of the Teutonic invaders for centuries and centuries, but also in the midst of the recent and dangerous snares of insidious pangermanism.

There are also to be found in the valley of the Isarco the historic little cities of Chiusa and of Bressanone, rich in memories and in art.

In short the upper valley of the Isarco, shut in between the mountains, rises to the foot of the great chain which closes it, while the confluent of the Rienza, or Valley of Pusteria (*Pusterthal* of the Germans) green and gay with little Alpine villages, extends towards the east, likewise terminating in the central Alps; and, opening into it, is another beautiful valley of Latin idiom, the deep and populous Badia, girded by the splendid Dolomites.

These, described in a very few lines, are the places and villages under the Austrian flag at the foot of the Alps, that Italy demands.

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The Trentino, a region of nearly four hundred thousand inhabitants, nationally compact, of the purest, proudest, most active, and most impassioned Italianism, and the Upper Adige, a region today of mixed speech, but rich in Italian survivals and all Italian in nature, have also their history in common, and it is a history which cries from every page the sacred names of Rome and Italy.

The first inhabitants belonged to the Mediterranean races. The original Italic element moved from the plain to rise along the natural courses in the mountainous basin of the Middle, and even of the Upper Adige. In the sepulchres there abound memories of Etruscan and Latin civilization. Two centuries before Christ, the dominion of Rome impressed upon the people of the mountains, along the Adige, its definite imprint, which has never been erased.

Trent, a splendid municipality, forms the centre of Latin irradiation extending to the extreme heights of the Alpine circle; so that not a few historians and geographers have called the whole central chain which geographically separates Italy from Germany, the *Alpes Tridentinae*.

For seven centuries the dominion of Rome in these valleys endured, and they were centuries of prosperity and splendour. Later, even in the dark barbaric ages, they continued to form part of the duchies and kingdoms of Italy. Across the pass of the Brenner Alps there descended con-

tinually the imperial German armies; more than seventy times they descended, bearing with them servitude and slaughter. In the year 1000 A. D. the Trentino and the Upper Adige formed those two episcopal Principalities of Trent and Bresanone, which through stormy vicissitudes, survived for eight centuries, down to our own times.

Their political life was troubled and menaced continually by the violence of the German counts of Castel Tirolo, to whom, for the misfortune of the country and of all Italy, there succeeded the Habsburgs. But the Principalities continually opposed might with right. Only in 1803 were their territories annexed to Austria. What then is the vaunted age-long dominion of Austria over the Trentino and the Upper Adige if not a falsification of history? Violence and rapine do not suffice to constitute lordship. The Principalities maintained their state conserving their condition up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. In those years, and in the succeeding ones, the country was overrun by the liberating armies of the young French Republic. Napoleon added Trent and Bolzano to the Italic kingdom. Wise and enlightened institutions, prudent and beneficent government gave to the Department of the Upper Adige a period of peace, order, prosperity and splendour.

With the vicissitudes of 1814 and the systematization of 1818 there returned, and took possession at Trent and Bolzano, the Austrian eagle, which from that time on has never departed. There have been, however, not more than a hundred years

of absolute and direct Austrian rule; and the war years 1848, 1859, 1866 must not be forgotten, in which Young Italy sprang to arms determined to reconstitute her national unity up to the sacred limits of her natural confines, penetrated into the Trentino, and appeared in the Upper Adige, to drive out from there the usurper from beyond the Alps.

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These attempts not having succeeded, the land continued to lie under the grievous foreign dominion which impoverished and oppressed it. Austria, in fact, exploited the natural resources of the country and devoted herself to erecting fortresses and to persecuting the liberals; Austria systematically prevented any development of road communications and of economic relations with the neighbouring Italian regions. Austria did its utmost to suffocate the intellectual life and the political aspirations of the Trentino. Many of the best patriots of this region soon became familiar with Austrian dungeons and the bitter road to exile. Many of its young men shed their blood in the wars of the Italian *risorgimento*.

The Trentino has given to the Italian nation many men illustrious in literature, in science and in art. The names of the writers Tartarotti and Vanetti, of the statesman Pilati, of the scientists Fontana, Scopoli, and Borsieri, of the poet Giovanni Prati, of the philosopher Antonio Rosmini who has so many admirers and followers in England, have overpassed the boundaries of

local fame; just as Alessandro Vittoria, Giovanni Modena and Giovanni Segantini are the universal pride of art, as well as of the Trentino which witnessed their birth.

Art in the Trentino is purely Italian. Her charming cities show at every step façades, painted and picturesquely decorated with frescoes, by celebrated painters. Even in the cities and boroughs of the Upper Adige, the porticos which flank the streets, recall the Italian custom; the castles and patrician houses show loggias, colonnades, pillars — graceful architectural characteristics derived from Italy. At Bressanone and at Bolzano there flourished schools of painting of which we have abundant remains, which clearly reveal the Italian influence. As in every other part of Italy, artistic treasures abound, not only in every part of the Trentino, but even to the last valley of the Upper Adige.

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The Trentino, which today is a country almost exclusively agricultural, was in the past, before the political conditions created by Austria exercised their crushing influence, a fine centre of industries. The mines constituted an immense source of wealth, and won for this region the name of the European California; together with the marble quarries they employed thousands of workmen. The silk industry, those of glass, of weaving and spinning once flourished. But the custom-house barriers closed to the Trentino (which remained to Austria, while the other parts of the peninsula united themselves in the new



Kingdom of Italy), the natural outlets for its industries, which, in fact, struggled for a time against the ruinous conditions created by political events, until finally they were forced to give up and close their factories.

An economic crisis harassed the country for full twenty years from 1870 to 1890, and in a milder form continued even after that; this has led, as its consequence, to a strong current of emigration, directed for the greater part to the countries of South America, and thus to a diminution of the population.

From the agrarian crisis the Trentino, thanks to the energy of its sons, found means to save itself by the variation of its crops and by agricultural cooperation. But the commerce in wood, the pastoral art, the raising of cattle continued to suffer from the diminished communication with Italy, so that for the upper valleys of the Alps, from lack of work there remained the bitter necessity of emigration.

In the Upper Adige the German administration produced better results; the country is rich in vines and orchards, whose products were exported to the north, and it was systematically favoured in communications with the north, so that it enjoyed prosperity, which will not, however, diminish with its annexation to the Kingdom of Italy, but will on the contrary be increased by the greater development of industries and commerce. Let it suffice to say that, of the hydraulic forces of the Trentino and the Upper Adige, estimated at 560,000 electric horse pow-

er, not even a fifth has up to the present been made use of. The scarcity of railways and roads causes a country to languish which could well contribute in a far greater degree to the wealth of Europe.

The civilized world, that is the « Entente » at war, has every good reason for the conviction that from today on, by substituting for the old, narrow, stupid and retrograde political economy of the mediaeval empire of the Habsburgs the fresh energies of Young Italy, it will bring to the Trentino and the Upper Adige, besides political redemption, economic benefits and general progress.

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Today in the American Senate they demand the destruction of the Habsburgs, a dynasty of delinquents; and in England conviction is rapidly gaining ground as to the political necessity of the suppression of Austria, if in future the reign of injustice, of violence and of the gallows is to cease and to give place to the union of free peoples; if it is desired finally to deprive the barbarous Germans of the hegemony of all Central Europe.

As a guarantee of future peace the allied countries of free peoples ought to require that the Alpine frontier-country should return to Italy, as much as that the Rhine country should return to France; these boundaries are more than national confines; the Upper Adige and Julian Venetia, like Alsace and Lorraine, mark the natural limits of a single civil unity.

Austria, which attempted in vain to crush the soul, the heart, the talent and the passion of the noble Trentine people; Austria, which has governed that country with violence, with terror, with the inquisition, with police proscriptions, with confiscations, with imprisonments, with fortresses, will not escape her defeat, already signalled in the imminent outcome of this cruel struggle which is renewing the world.

The King of Italy has promised his soldiers to plant the tricolour on the « sacred boundaries » and everyone knows that these boundaries are the summits of the Rhetic and Julian Alps, the Brenner with the Vetta d'Italia.

While the valleys of the Trentino and of the Upper Adige are about to be reunited to the nation, and the governments of the Allies have recognized the justice and the necessity of the Italian territorial claims, the intellectual men of Italy address themselves to the friendly peoples of other nations in order that the prejudices and false conceptions craftily created by the German organization may be dispelled, and that they may see things in the light of truth and come to a full appreciation of all of Italy's rights.

English and Americans are not well acquainted with the Trentino and the Upper Adige; or, to put it better, they are not accustomed to regard these countries in their natural and historic relations with Italy. They do not well distinguish them or, up till today have not known how to distinguish them, from the Tyrol — from that fictitious Austrian administrative union in which they have been included.

Perhaps this very political, administrative unity, joining to the Transalpine valley of the Inn that of the Cisalpine Adige; perhaps the conventional type of the Teutonic Alpine inhabitants who live upon both slopes, have lent consistency to a stereotyped representation of the Tyrol and the Tyrolese, which hinders, hides or destroys that which should be and will be, the point of view of free eyes looking out from the Italian side, upon a part of her sacred soil — upon this group of Cisalpine valleys nourished by the sun and by the south-flowing cataracts, ringing with Latin idioms and with the tributary waters of the Adriatic.

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What will and can be the objections, the biased and malicious insinuations, of the enemy? That Italy is impelled by thirst for conquest and territory. A diminutive territory, it is true, but the regions of mixed speech; that Italy wishes to extend her dominion over peoples who are alien to her?

But the upright conscience of the civilized world will reply: No! Italy does not desire annexations or conquests, but she destroys, by right of justice, the usurpations of a mediaeval state and an invading people over a part of her sacred national territory. A diminutive territory, it is true, but profoundly dear to Italy because it rightfully belongs to her and because it is essential to her safety and her liberty.

Others will maintain the rights acquired by the Germanic peoples on the southern Alpine slope

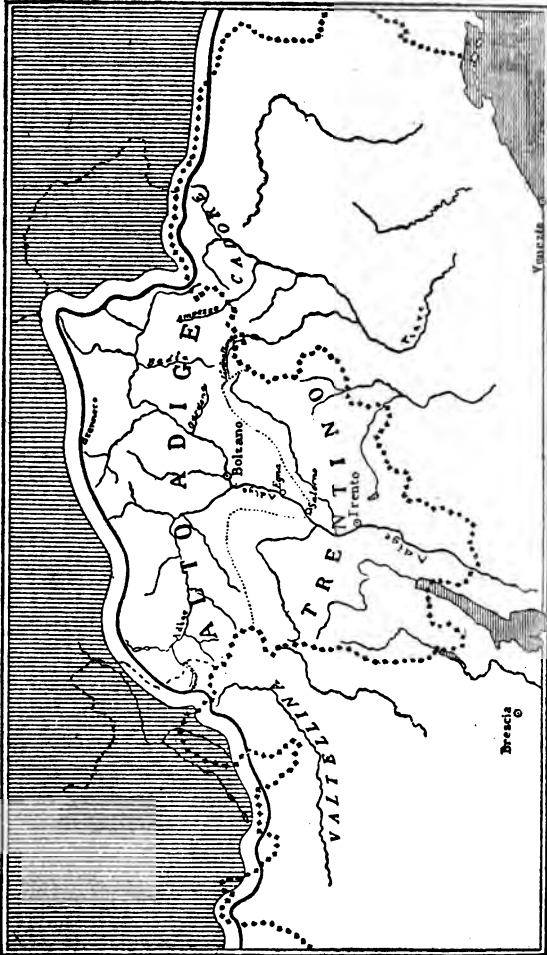


**TRIESTE - Archaeological Museum.**



**CAPODISTRIA - Palace of the Praetor.**

MAP OF THE TRENTINO AND OF THE UPPER ADIGE.



The black line indicates Italy's natural boundaries.

by occupation, or will propose to refer the question to a settlement by plebiscite, or will suggest that the country be divided between valley and valley, according as ignorance of the local conditions, or malicious intention guides the hostile critic.

To these, cultivated thinkers of the civilized world will know how to reply: that Italy's magnificent resurrection, reached through heroic ordeal, must not resolve itself into the confirmation and legitimization of the fruits of long continued and iniquitous foreign persecutions and rapine. They will reply that the few alien inhabitants of the highest valleys in question ought not to constitute the plebiscite; but that the plebiscite will be composed, and has been composed, of the entire population of Italy, resolute in desiring their nation perfect and secure behind her strong, just and eternal frontiers. They will reply that there cannot be given to Italy, as a prize for her heroic effort, half or three quarters of the basin of the Adige, but that all peoples must agree in requiring the complete restitution of all that is hers — the Trentino and the Upper Adige, as far as the Brenner with the Vetta d'Italia; and that all should rejoice fraternally over such restitution, as over an honest achievement honestly accomplished.



## CHAPTER V.

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### JULIAN VENETIA EASTERN FRIULI, TRIESTE and ISTRIA.

**J**ulian Venetia, the extreme eastern portion of the Italian province known as « la Venezia », a land which Italy has revendicated by her victories in the present war, extends from the mountains to the Adriatic. It is formed by the level lands through which the Po flows down to the sea, and by the Istrian peninsula, which is hemmed in to the east by the Julian Alps. The latter rise up from the valley of the Fella and end in Monte Bittorai to the east of Fiume (1). Julian Venetia is divided into two parts: Eastern Friuli, and Trieste with Istria. Where the plain reaches the foot of the Alps, beyond the river Isonzo, lies the city of Gorizia.

The region of which Gorizia is the centre is called Eastern Friuli, to distinguish it from Wes-

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(1) Cfr. the work by the Italian General Staff, *Le Alpi che cir-  
gono l'Italia* (Turin, 1895).

tern Friuli, the most important town of which is Udine, already acquired by the Italians as far back as 1866. In 1910 the population of Eastern Friuli numbered 260,700 inhabitants. The second region forming part of Julian Venetia is Istria (690,000 inhabitants in 1910), which begins on the Carso and extends eastward as far as Fiume and to the south as far as Pola. The most important city of Istria and of Julian Venetia is Trieste (235,000 inhabitants in 1910). The whole region is an Italian province which remained in the hands of the Austrians as a result of the unfortunate war in 1866. It has been said that Italy, in revendicating the Julian province as her own, laid claims on a region which had never really belonged to her. Nothing could be more false; even if subject to Austrian rule as was Lombardy down to 1859 and the Veneto down to 1866, the Julian region and Trieste have always been considered Italian territory. And as Italy went to war in 1859 for Lombardy and Milan, and in 1866 for Venice and the Veneto, so now she is fighting to win back Trieste and its province. Through this war, by the will of her people, Italy is completing her unity: namely she wrests from the stranger who had usurped them, those regions which always belonged to Italy and through the acquisition of which she will now recover the natural boundaries of the nation. These boundaries to the east are the Julian Alps; they constitute the mountain barrier which geographically encloses Italy and which alone is capable of defending her. Here we find the mountain passes through

which have poured all the invading armies that have devastated Italy in the past.

In order to be able without hindrance to carry out her high-handed policy of oppression, Austria holds tenaciously these mountain passes which constitute a perpetual menace to Italy. To the north, in the Julian Alps, there is the Plezzo Pass, known as *The key of Italy*, and to the east is the Prevaldo or Longatico Pass, called *The main gate of Italy* (1). It was through this opening that the barbarians made their successive inroads (2), the last of which in 1915 by the soldiers of Francis Joseph and of General Conrad. Austria obtained possession of these natural Italian boundaries, constituting the very gates of Italy, by unjust wars, and one of Italy's main objects in entering upon the present war was to regain these frontiers. That is why King Victor Emanuel III, in his proclamation to the army when Italy fell into line with the champions of justice and democracy, exhorted his soldiers to plant the tricolour flag on the natural, namely geographical frontiers of the Italian fatherland. From the remotest antiquity to our own times, from Strabo and Pliny to Reclus and Marinelli (3), all geographers, with the exception of a few Germans, have unanimously agreed that those frontiers are the Julian Alps. A considerable quantity of imperial documents prove

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(1) Cfr. ANTONINI, *Il Friuli Orientale* (Milano, 1865) and TANARO, *Gorizia et la défense de l'Italie* (Paris, 1917).

(2) Cfr. HODGKINS, *Italy and her invaders* (Oxford, 1880).

(3) RECLUS, *Nouvelle Géographie universelle*, vol. III. — MARINELLI, *La Terra*, vol. IV.

without doubt that from the early middle-ages to the nineteenth century even the foreign lords of the Julian region recognized it as an Italian province, calling its various parts, *Italian districts or Italian boundaries* (1). In 1848 the official organ of the Austrian government at Trieste openly recognized that Trieste and Italy formed one and the same country (2). But what is of even greater importance, from our democratic point of view, is the fact that throughout the centuries the inhabitants of Julian Venetia *have had the deep consciousness of being Italians* and of inhabiting an Italian province. All the ancient Gorizian authors who wrote about eastern Friuli, from Ischia (1684) Bauzer and Coronini (XVIII century) to Antonini (1865) speak of their native land as a part of Italy. All the Triestin and Istrian writers who have described their respective towns and cities, from Coppo (1540), Goineo (1560), Tommasini (1630), Scussa (1680), Ireneo della Croce (1698) to Rossetti (1843) and Kandler (1873) have had the same consciousness of Italianity. They have always proclaimed that Italy ended on the Julian Alps. Modern historians of those regions have brought this consciousness to its highest dignity. Their inhabitants have never forgotten to what country and to what nationality they belong. In 1485 and in 1524 the Triestins, protesting against

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(1) Cfr. STUMPF, *Die Reichskanzler* (Innsbruck, 1873); *Codice diplomatico istriano* (Trieste, 1846-1867); *Il diritto d'Italia su Trieste e l'Istria* (documenti), Turin, 1915.

(2) *Osservatore Triestino*, 24 March 1848.

certain odious attempts at *Germanization* made by Austria, openly declared that Trieste was an Italian city and that its inhabitants spoke nothing but Italian (1). When after the abominable pact of the Holy Alliance, Austria was preparing fresh measures for the *Germanization* of Trieste, a noble son of that city, Domenico Rossetti, Procuratore of the Commune, stoutly maintained that Trieste belonged to Italy. Again in 1902 the Triestin deputy, Hortis pronounced an eloquent and courageous speech before the Reichstag at Vienna proclaiming in the face of Slavs and Germans that Trieste is an Italian city (2). The hatred against the Germans is deep-rooted and of ancient date in Julian Venetia, and acquired more strength and bitterness precisely where they sought to establish their rule by barbarous violence, namely in Trieste. The town, which was taken by the Austrians in 1382 by means of an ably devised stratagem, vainly attempted to rebel in 1384; there was another uprising in 1468, but the results were disastrous, and Trieste was almost destroyed. In 1508, when the Republic of St. Marc occupied the town, it was openly proclaimed in the Municipal Council of Trieste « that Venice had delivered the unfortunate city from the barbarians ».

Towards the year 1730 the Austrian, Reygersfeld, who had lived for some time at Trieste,

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(1) Cfr. CAVALLI, *Storia di Trieste* (Trieste, 1912) and TAMARO, *L'italianità di Trieste* (Milan, 1915).

(2) ROSSETTI, *Alla mnemosyne del signor Kreil* (Trieste, 1818); HORTIS, *Per l'università italiana a Trieste* (Trieste, 1902).

wrote that its inhabitants « cordially hated the Germans ». The *Vienna Presse* proved at length in 1862 that the Triestins entertained a deeply rooted, natural antipathy for German Kultur (1). The anti-German tradition is continuous and uninterrupted.

Julian Venetia took an active part with all her best and most prominent citizens, in the various phases of Italy's national Risorgimento. The first voice raised in the eighteenth century exhorting the Italians to remember their great origin and to strive towards unity and independence was that of an Istrian, the famous Gianrinaldo Carli of Capodistria, who in 1765 wrote the pamphlet *La patria degli Italiani*. A Triestin family, the family of Domenico Piatti, gave two martyrs to the Neapolitan struggle for independence in 1799. After the fall of Napoleon the Austrian government was re-established by main force, especially in Istria, in 1814. The list of martyrs which Julian Venetia has since given to the cause of Italian liberty against Austria, is long and eloquent: from Giulio Canal of Trieste, who died in an Austrian prison in 1845, to the Istrian Trepinovi, shot in 1852 at Messina; from Carola Pascolati, of Cervignano (Friuli), mercilessly flogged by the Austrians in 1862 for her patriotism, to Carlo Jamsceg, the noble Gorizian patriot who died a lingering death in an Austrian prison in 1881 after

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(1) *Codice diplomatico istriano*, vol. III; BIDERMANN, *Die Romanen und ihre Verbreitung in Oesterreich*. II (Graz, 1877); TAMARO, *Trieste et son rôle antigermanique* (Paris, 1917).

untold suffering, and to Guglielmo Oberdan of Trieste who was sentenced to death for his patriotism and died on the scaffold in 1882 at Trieste, his last cry being: *Viva l'Italia!*

Even greater is the number of soldiers from Julian Venetia who volunteered for the wars and revolutions of Italian independence. Some of these patriots, as for instance Marziano Ciotti and Francesco Scodnik of Friuli, Enrico Ferolli, Giovanni Orlandini, Costantino Resmann, Filippo Zamboni, Giuseppe Revere, Giacomo Venezian of Trieste, Carlo Combi, Cristoforo Venier, and Leonardo d'Andri of Istria, will live in Italian history among the finest figures of the Risorgimento (1). We all know how the Italian wars of independence ended: the last struggle of 1866 left Julian Venetia in the hands of Austria. But the Italian population of Julian Venetia, even after the unfortunate war of 1866, carried on the struggle against Austria with all its strength, with heroic valour, affirming the sacred rights of Italy and its unrestrained yearning after liberty.

Julian Venetia is inhabited not only by Italians directly descended from the ancient Romans, but also by bands of Slav peoples (Slovenes, Cici, Berchini, Fucki, Croatians, Savrini, Morlacchi) who made their appearance in the Middle Ages or even in more modern times. The proportion between the number of Italians and Slavs as it was recorded officially in 1910, and on which the Austrian

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(1) LUPO DELLA MONTAGNA, *Il Trentino, la Venezia Giulia e la Dalmazia nel Risorgimento Italiano*.

agents base their calculations, has no value, primarily because the statistics were deliberately falsified by the Austrians; secondly, because as Julian Venetia is only a part of the Veneto, arbitrarily mutilated by Austria, the proportion should be based not exclusively on the number of Italians inhabiting Julian Venetia, but upon the total population of Venetia; thirdly, because under no consideration, not even from a statistical point of view, can Julian Venetia, which is a small region (about 7000 sq. kilometres) be regarded as an autonomous and independent country, while it is historically, geographically and for national reasons a part of Italy; fourthly because, as we shall see, a considerable number of the Slavs are enrolled in the « civilian army » with which Austria invaded Julian Venetia and attempted to suffocate the spirit of Italianity.

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As regards Trieste, it is not true that Austria clings to it for vital reasons; the problem of the port of Trieste is of a political rather than of an economic nature. Austria could very well live and breathe, if it is destined to go on living, without an outlet on the Adriatic. Statistics show that before the war only 27 per cent of her maritime trade passed through Trieste, while 63 per cent went via Hamburg and Bremen. Austrian business firms were far more numerous at Hamburg than at Trieste, through which only 21 per cent of the total imports and hardly 18 per cent of the exports passed. It is evident therefore



that Austria does not cling to Trieste for commercial reasons, but in order to carry on an ambitious Mediterranean policy. Austria makes use of Trieste as of a bridgehead for the political and economic conquest of the Levant and of the Far East. The roads across the Balkans leading to the Levant are difficult, while the Adriatic is a convenient carrier and Trieste a commodious port. And lurking behind Austria is Germany, which has long fixed her eyes on Trieste as an outlet into the Mediterranean.

But why continue to talk about Austria, when members of Congress elected by the great American people, the champions of justice and liberty, have frankly declared their belief in the absolute necessity of destroying Austria, the impure source of all the ills of Europe?

Returning to the question of the Slavs, we will say that their migrations were prompted by two motives, one natural, the other artificial. The latter we find in the Middle Ages and even in our own times, when Austria deliberately dumped Slavs on Italian soil with a view to denationalize it (1). A natural manner, so to speak, of immigration into Julian Venetia, was when the Slavs invaded and devastated it. These immigrations have left behind them few human traces, but many ruins. The majority of the Slavs in Julian Venetia are descendants of Croatsians, Morlacchi, Bosnians, Montenegrins and Albanians who,

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(1) DE FRANCESCHI, *L'Istria, note storiche* (Parenzo, 1875); GAYDA, *L'Italia d'oltre confine* (Turin, 1914).

flying before Turkish persecution between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries, sought refuge in Italy and received a cordial welcome from Venice and Trieste in Istria (1).

These currents of immigration which poured into Italy over the Alps cannot form even a secondary base for political or territorial revendications. They only furnish another proof of Italian civilization.

The Jugo-Slavs, goaded on by the Austrian government, ask for themselves those lands which the Italians opened to their forefathers that they might escape from extermination at the hands of the Turks. Something similar would happen if the many thousands of Belgian refugees now in Wales were unable to return to their native country and, continuing to develop their national individuality, in a century or two were to lay claim to Wales as belonging to a resuscitated Belgium. A close parrallel would be presented if the Basques and Catalans (over 400,000) who, driven out of Spain by the Saracens sought refuge in France, were to claim that the French departments of the upper and eastern Pyrenees, which they now inhabit, should rightfully belong to Spain.

In the nineteenth century, when the first national movements began, Austria felt the double need of having an offensive base against the rest of Italy in Julian Venetia and of ruthlessly putting

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(1) MARSICH, *Come vennero gli Slavi in Istria* (Trieste, 1878); COMBI, *L'Istria* (Venice, 1886).

down and suffocating the national Risorgimento movement in the province itself.

The means to which Austria had recourse was the artificial immigration of foreigners, chiefly Germans and Slavs, whom she purposely taught to hate and harass the Italians. But the latter did everything in their power to resist and neutralize the action of the government, which attained its maximum violence in 1848, and lasted so long that even in 1859 the Triestins and the Istrians appealed against it to the proposed European Congress. In 1868 when several Triestins were killed by the Slavs, the first bloody episode occurred in that national struggle which was only interrupted by the outbreak of the European war.

It remains to be noted that the Slavs who immigrated into Julian Venetia have not succeeded in forming even an elementary civilization of their own; they have contributed nothing to science or to art; for the most part they live in the country, under the most primitive conditions; they have no civilization as they have no history. On the other hand the Italians of the Julian Region may pride themselves on a most noble history, both as regards their splendid municipal record and their contribution of soldiers, statesmen, artists and scientists to the greatness of Venice and Italy. In fact many of the men who have added glory to Italian arts and letters came from the Julian Region; suffice it to mention the humanist Vergerio, one of the precursors of the Rinascimento; the poet and writer Girolamo Muizio; the poets Zovenzoni, Rapicio, Bonomo, Cal-

dana; the painters Carpaccio, Bernardo Parentino, and Trevisani; the physician Santorio; statesmen like Pietro Giuliani, Bonomo and Corraducci; the economist Gianrinaldo Carlo; the famous violinist Giuseppe Tartini; the poets Pietro Zorutti, Besenghi degli Ughi and Giuseppe Revere; Graziadio Ascoli, the creator of Romanic glottology; the historians Rossetti, Manzano, de Franceschi, De Castro, Kandler, Morelli and the greatest historian of Venice, Romain; the naturalists Biasoletto and Tommasini, the musicians and composers Manna, Sinico, Ricci, Usiglio Smareglia. Besides, the Italians of Julian Venetia have created in all their towns and cities admirable artistic monuments, beautiful buildings and priceless pictures. These works of art give the Julian Region the imprint of her perfect Italian physiognomy. There is only one type of civilization in Julian Venetia, namely the Italian, which holds exclusive and glorious sway. The monuments which this civilization has left in eastern Friuli, at Trieste and in Istria are among the most interesting in the whole of Italy (1).

In Friuli, Grado and Aquileia are especially rich in works of Italian art. The Basilica of Aquileia, built in various epochs between the fourth and the fifteenth centuries, is a veritable masterpiece. Nor less venerable owing to its antiquity

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(1) Cfr. JACKSON, *Dalmatia, the Quarnero and Istria* (Oxford, 1887); HAMILTON, *The Shores of the Adriatic, the Austrian side* (London, 1908); SILLANI, *Lombi di Patria* (Milan, 1915); SILLANI, *Mare nostrum* (Milan, 1917).

and to the beauty of its mosaics is the Duomo of Trieste, which dates back to the ninth century. Many Roman ruins of temples, arches and theatres, adorn the city of Trieste, bearing witness to its antiquity and to its Italianity which has never been belied. Istria itself is one great museum, in which every town and hamlet preserves its treasure of Italian art. Pola boasts of antiquities which can vie with those of Rome, foremost among them being the immense amphitheatre, which is simply marvellous, while the Golden Gate and the Temple dedicated to Rome are works of extraordinary beauty. At Parenzo, at Pinguento, at Capodistria, everywhere the traces of Roman greatness are to be found; for Parenzo also possesses a superb Byzantine temple of the sixth century, one of the most precious and most famous monuments of that epoch, in which the glory of Italian art shines out resplendent. When almost the whole of Istria belonged to Venice, it was endowed by the latter with public and private buildings which are charming specimens of Venetian grace. The churches of Muggia, of Capodistria, of Albona, the palace of the praetor of Capodistria, the palace at Pola, the church of St. Francis also at Pola, the battlements of Pirano, the towers of Parenzo are all pure examples of Venetian art. And in the churches and houses are numberless works of art, triumphs of brush and chisel. Untold treasures may be found in the cathedrals, paintings by Carpaccio, by Cima da Conegliano, by Alvise Vivarini; sculptures of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,

altar pieces of the fifteenth, and numerous other valuable works of art are scattered about everywhere, giving to the Julian Region its truly Italian character.

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The condition of the Italians who remained in Austria after 1866 was almost unbearable and became worse from year to year. In Julian Venetia especially they had to bear the brunt of a twofold hostility on the part of the Imperial authorities, who while they persecuted the Italians owing to their unswervingly patriotic attitude, encouraged and egged on even to fanaticism the imperialistic tendencies of the Slavs.

The indignant protests of the Italians and the ardour with which they everywhere prepared for resistance failed to induce the government to desist.

The programme of *Slavization* continued and increased steadily, assuming an extreme and intransigent character during the last ten years. In 1866 Governor Kellersperg had openly proclaimed that the supreme interests of the Austrian State rendered it advisable to favour all non-Italian elements to the detriment of the Italians, and this advice was scrupulously carried out. In 1910 an eye-witness who certainly cannot be suspected of excessive friendship towards Italy, the Viennese Hermann Bahr (1), wrote that it was clearly the government's intention to deprive Trie-

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(1) Bahr, *Dalmatinische Reise* (Berlin, 1910).



**POLA - Temple of Augustus and Rome.**



**POLA - The Arena.**



ste of its national character; and during the last few years the deputies of Trieste and of Istria have repeatedly denounced in the Chamber at Vienna this denationalizing process.

Austria, in order to justify her foreign rule over an Italian province and over Italian cities, had to change their very nature, sparing no effort in order that they should cease to be the cherished national possession of the Italians. After 1866, as a result of the historical lessons which she had received from Italy, and having almost the intuition that her sway over Italian soil was of a precarious and temporary nature, she intensified her anti-Italian campaign in the hope of strengthening and consolidating her position.

But, owing to a natural reaction, her efforts merely resulted in the wider diffusion of irredentism.

The action of the Austrian government was both monstrous and tragic, because it oppressed the Italian movement and sought by repeated efforts to paralyse it, although this movement, especially during the last fifty years, had been constantly progressing, despite numerous national disasters, and had shown an invincible inherent strength.

The documents which Austria has prepared in order to deceive Europe into believing that the Julian Region, and above all its cities, are not Italian, but lands over which other races hold a joint sway, consist chiefly in successive census returns and statistics of population — veritable second line trenches, made ready, like the defensive

lines on the Carso, against the eventuality of a crushing defeat.

The acts of violence (1) which accompanied the taking of the census at Trieste in 1910, for the purpose of artificially increasing as much as possible the number of Slav inhabitants, constitute one of the most shameful pages in the history of Austrian misrule. This unscrupulous system was pushed to such extremes that even the Central Committee of Statistics at Vienna, the official Slav-German organ, declared that the results of the official census did not correspond to the real facts and were absolutely false (2).

Standing firmly on their nationalist platform, asserting that the Julian Region is Italian soil occupied by Austria, the Italians, both in their statistical estimates of the population and in the theoretic defence of their national claims, justly regard as brothers and natural defenders of the life and history and development of Julian Venetia those Italians who, although politically the subjects of the Italian Kingdom, were born in Trieste or spent the greater part of their lives there. Austria, on the contrary, always persisted in considering those *regnicoli* as strangers, deprived of all historical rights and privileges, practically non-existent in civic life. According to the census taken by the Municipality, there were in 1914 at

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(1) Minutely denounced by the deputies of Trieste in an interpellation which remained unanswered, 26th June 1911.

(2) K. K. *Centralkommission fuer die Statistik*, vol. II, fascicolo I, August 1913.

Trieste about 180,000 Italians (140,000 Austrian subjects and 40,000 *regnicoli* or Italian subjects) as against 50,000 foreigners, mostly Slavs and Germans. The government then took a counter census, juggling with facts and figures, excluding the Italian subjects, diminishing the number of Italians and artificially increasing that of the Slavs.

The government imposed electoral laws which permitted the Slav immigrants to weigh unjustly on the destinies of Trieste and of other Italian cities. Thus at Trieste, tens of thousands of Italians, Triestins but not Austrian subjects, whose demand for naturalization had been systematically refused, had no power whatever in the civic struggles from which the national destiny of the city depended. On the other hand Carinthians, Styrians, Tyrolese, Carniolians, Bohemians, Croats, Serbs, Slovaks and Poles, dumped down from every part of the Empire, from the countries most remote from Italian civilization and from Italian interests, were promptly given a vote, thus becoming active soldiers in the ranks organized by Austria's denationalizing policy to the detriment of an Italian city. Gorizia and Pola suffered not less than Trieste.

Slavism thrived in Julian Venetia chiefly thanks to the support which it received always and everywhere, even without asking for it, from the Austrian government. From Tolmino to Dalmatia the battle cry of the Slavs is: *U moru Taliansky!* Throw the Italians into the sea! A Croatian deputy of Istria, named Laginia, went so far as to

brag that the Italian towns of Istria were to become buttons in the great Slav mantle extending down to the sea! This is merely an example of Austro-Slav annexionist madness! (1).

For Italy the *Slavization* of Julian Venetia meant the national death of an Italian province, and the victorious advance of Austrian Slavism within Italy's geographical and historical confines.

As the Hungarian government was at the same time conducting a fierce campaign of Magyar propaganda in Fiume, and the Austrian government had already taken Dalmatia from the Italians, Italy had every reason to affirm that Austria-Hungary, *aiming for a number of years at the destruction of Italian nationality and civilization on the shores of the Adriatic* (2), had acted with the manifest intention of profoundly altering the national equilibrium in the Adriatic wholly to her own advantage and to the detriment of Italian interests.

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Baron Burian told the Duke of Avarna in 1915, when discussing Italy's proposals (3), that Austria-Hungary, « though exacting the loyalty and

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(1) Documents upon this *Slavization* were published by the *Piccolo* of Trieste during the campaign for the administrative elections of 1913 (May-June). Especially important is a pamphlet for purposes of propaganda issued by the Slav socialists, whose national programme is far more radical than that of the « bourgeoisie ». See also PITACCO, *Discorsi, interpellanze e proposte* (Trieste, 1913), and BATTARA, *Il Trialismo*, « Rassegna Contemporanea », 1913, fasc. V.

(2) The Hon. Sonnino's note to the Powers.

(3) Green book. Document of April 29 (N. 75).

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fidelity of her Italian citizens had never done anything calculated to injure or undermine their national character ».

This statement is absolutely false. The whole question of the Italians subject to Austria is a clear proof of the enormous and uninterrupted efforts made by successive Austrian governments with a view to crushing and destroying the Italian spirit. As far back as the end of the eighteenth century, Austria refused to grant Italian schools to Trieste and founded German schools in their stead.

When Napoleon occupied the Adriatic provinces, the French government accorded elementary and secondary Italian schools. But when the Austrian government was reinstated in 1814 it suppressed them all, and replaced the Italian elementary schools by German elementary schools.

The Austrians — to mention only recent years — did not spend a single centime for popular Italian schools and only maintained two secondary Italian schools which were in existence before the Austrian occupation. On the other hand they founded numerous German popular schools (two at Trieste, two at Pola and one in Gorizia), two German gymnasiums and lyceums, and three German technical schools (one in each of the above mentioned towns), one Croatian gymnasium and lyceum at Pisino, one Slovene gymnasium in Gorizia. Always foreign schools for Italian cities whose Italian character had been confirmed not only by two thousand years of history, but by the firm will of the people !

The budget of public instruction for the first half of 1914, as regards the Julian Region, devoted 1,121,020 crowns to non-Italian schools and only 154,642 crowns to Italian schools. Some idea of the denationalizing effects of this rankly unjust and partisan attitude may be gleaned from the fact that in 1912 the German schools numbered no less than 1012 Italian pupils. As a further example we may say that in that same year the German gymnasium of Gorizia was attended by only 50 German pupils as against 385 Italians.

The situation was absurd, for the school had been founded for the 50 Germans whereas it was crowded by the 385 Italians who were unjustly deprived of the right to use their mother tongue for the purposes of study.

The school question thus became the bitterest and the most serious among all those which weighed on the Italians subject to the Austrians, and on this question they concentrated determined and often prodigious efforts, for the defence of their nationality. It was chiefly thanks to this tenacious resistance that they succeeded in counteracting the menace of Austria's anti-Italian school policy, which threatened the very vitals of Italian nationalism with destruction.

The most important phase of the educational question was the university question, already so well known to international public opinion that a detailed repetition of its history is unnecessary. From 1848 to 1914 Austria's Italian subjects unceasingly demanded the institution of an Italian University, or at least of an Italian faculty of

jurisprudence, but their request, although favourably received by the Austrian parliament, was obstinately refused, in spite of intense and continual popular agitation, meetings and demonstrations of students, often ending in the shedding of blood. Italy's diplomatic intervention and the openly expressed opinion of other civilized nations proved equally unavailing.

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The work of the Austrian government to effect its plans of *Slavization* was carried on chiefly where it was in absolute control, namely in the government offices. Down to 1866 Austria had striven tenaciously to *Germanize* all government offices even in the Lombardo-Veneto. At that time, however, this could almost be regarded as a division of the spoils and as an act of obedience to the prevailing police system.

But in the Julian Region the substitution of Italian employés by Slavs (seldom by Germans) and the introduction of Slavs into already existing offices or in offices especially created for them, constituted part of a carefully devised plan having for its object the denationalization of the Italians. The Austrian government encouraged the artificial immigration of an enormous number of families belonging to nationalities different from that of the original inhabitants, and by placing at the head of a bureaucratic network men of a different race and of inferior intelligence and civilization, it humiliated the Italian race and placed it in a condition of servitude and inferiority.

The *Slavization* of the government offices was carried on systematically and thoroughly.

In order to have some show of justification against the continual protests of the Italians, the government exacted from its employés the knowledge of three languages: German, Slav and Italian. When the Italians in order not to be completely shut out from a government career, began studying the Slav language, they found that a Slav knowing Italian very badly was always and invariably preferred to an Italian candidate with a perfect knowledge of the Slav language. Here are a few symptomatic figures: in 1908 at Trieste out of 417 subordinate employés in the postal and telegraph offices, only 93 were Italians; out of 710 in the state railways only 20; of 560 customs-house guards 146, all the others being Slavs. According to statistics based on the official census taken in 1910, the lower employés in the government offices numbered 4600 persons: of these, 3600 were Slavs and the remaining thousand Italians or Germans.

The same conditions prevailing at Trieste obtained in the other cities of the Julian Region. The Italians were obliged either to remain idle or to adopt some new and uncongenial occupation; thus numerous young men who had university degrees and were gifted with more than the average share of intelligence were forced to take up humble occupations only because their Italian nationality precluded them from the possibility of following a career in the government offices. The working classes were also placed at a great



disadvantage. Vital forces of great value, which might have helped Julian Venetia to progress, were thus dissipated. Emigration was the natural consequence. No fewer than 24 professors who emigrated from the Julian Region are now teaching in the Italian Universities. Men of the highest merit, such as Barzilai, who became minister, senators Ciamician and Lustig, the distinguished librarian Morpurgo and a number of others, were forced to emigrate from Trieste because their Italian nationality debarred them from all possibility of success in life. From Pola, from Monfalcone, from Trieste, the Italian workmen, dismissed from the establishments which directly or indirectly depended upon the government and replaced by Slavs, had been forced to emigrate in thousands. Many of these, whose only guilt consisted in being Italians, have received a generous and noble hospitality in the United States.

Similar methods of progressive *Slavization* were applied in the most barefaced manner to the law courts at Trieste.

On the eve of the war, thanks to a movement which had been slowly going on during the last few years, almost all the judges were Slovene or Croatian, as also the great majority of the clerks and secretaries, nearly all the ushers and all the personnel of the prisons. The same process was applied to the Tribunals of Pola, Rovigno and Gorizia.

By this artificial *Slavization* of the tribunals the Austrian government obtained in Julian Venetia,

at Trieste and especially in Istria, not only the increase of the Slav population, but the subservience of justice to politics. A veritable reign of terror began, because the Italians were forced to the conviction that justice was wholly in the arbitrary hands of strangers both in political and in civil cases.

In order to make this nefarious work less apparent to the outside world, there were issued from the tax offices and the courts a quantity of documents in which the surnames of individuals and the names of towns and villages were arbitrarily altered so as to appear Slav.

The stratagems employed to further the Slav cause were even more far reaching when applied to the labour market. The Austrian government, well knowing that natural immigration was not sufficient to alter the deeply rooted Italianity of Trieste or to assume political importance, carried into effect an extensive plan of artificial immigration, importing Slavs of all kinds into the Julian Region. For example when the Austrian government inaugurated the Tauern railway, it dumped into Trieste in less than fifteen days over seven hundred families of Slav railwaymen, and lodged them in barrack-like houses purposely built all in the quarter of St. Vitus, so that the new Slav mass might influence the result of the elections in that quarter of the town. At the same time it imported into Gorizia four hundred families of railwaymen, for the most part Slavs but with a numerous sprinkling of Germans. It is easy to understand what a deep and sudden change was

effected in the relative importance of different national groups and in national statistical returns by this arbitrary and artificial intermingling of races. Suffice it to say that the Slav railwaymen dumped into Trieste had over one thousand children between the ages of 6 and 14, as proved by school statistics.

As regards the question of the *regnicoli* (subjects of the Italian Kingdom residing at Trieste), it had a moment of international celebrity when the Viceroy Prince Hohenlohe, in August 1913, ordered the Municipality of Trieste to dismiss all Italian employees who were not Austrian subjects. This was one of the most daring and effective experiments of artificial *Slavization*, and led to an open diplomatic conflict between the Italian and Austrian governments.

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Baron Burian, in the interview with Duke d'Avarna to which we have already referred, stated that the Italian element was largely represented in the Trieste Municipal Council, and that the Italians enjoyed a most satisfactory position from every point of view, both as regards numbers, culture and economic conditions. Lies are the favourite weapons of Germans. We have already seen how satisfactory was the régime to which the Italian subjects of Austria were subjected after 1866!

It is necessary, however, to point out as a reply to Baron Burian's assertions, that the large number of Italian representatives in the Municipality where, by right of millenary historical traditions

and of the fundamentally Italian character of the city, they should have formed not only the majority but the totality, was by no means the result of benevolent concessions on the part of the Austrian government, but was entirely due to the strenuous and violent electoral struggles by which the representatives won their seats. When Baron Beck, Prime Minister, in the year 1908 laid before the Viennese Chamber his bill for the reform of the electoral system in the Municipality of Trieste, he explicitly declared that its object was *to strengthen in Trieste the idea of the Austrian state against the Italians*. Which meant that it was proposed to render it difficult or impossible for the Municipality of Trieste to freely pursue its nationalist policy.

If, notwithstanding all this opposition, the Italians succeeded in obtaining the majority necessary to deal with all national problems without need of compromises, their victory, obtained against the most terrible odds, was due to the enthusiasm and compact discipline with which the people responded in 1909 and 1913, to the appeal of the nationalist party. And this success was achieved in open defiance of the Austrian government, which, though obliged to witness its own defeat, had its revenge by systematically persecuting the municipal administration in a thousand ways.

At Pola in 1907, the Italians had achieved a magnificent municipal victory. Seeing that the people stood firm and refused to give way, the government, after dissolving the newly elected

Council, promulgated an electoral reform by which it introduced into the Municipal Council so many socialists, so many Slavs, and so many «representatives of the Imperial and Royal Navy », that it placed the Municipality under its thumb. A similar attempt, however, utterly failed at Gorizia.

In Istria the war waged by the Austrian government against the Municipalities was especially successful in those districts where the two races, Italian and Slav, were most closely mixed, Arbitrary electoral laws attached vast Slav rural districts to Italian towns and cities; Italian employés were systematically replaced by Slavs; village priests, imbued with a sort of Slav fanaticism, organized regular crusades against the Italians. These acts of electoral violence and abuse resulted in exciting the ignorant Croatian peasants to such a pitch of frenzy that in 1897 they actually laid siege to Parenzo, cut down with impunity the vines belonging to Italians and set fire to their houses. Electoral bribery and corruption were openly practised, at first by granting immunity from taxation and special subsidies to the Croats, and later by buying their votes and employing all sorts of other illicit practises to foist them on the towns as *bona fide* citizens. By these methods the Austrian government succeeded in placing such purely Italian towns as Pisino, Pinguente and Rozzo under municipal administrations in which the Croatian element held sway.

As regards the benevolent sentiments of the Austrian government regarding the autonomy of

the Trieste Municipality, alleged by Baron Burian, we will quote a single decree from the documents published by the Governor, Prince Hohenlohe, in 1913, namely the one by which in the year 1906, he deprived the Trieste Municipality of its, so-called *attribuzioni delegate* (functions of state, for example, the right of granting concessions for new industrial plants, the inspection of factories and public buildings, delegated by the government to the municipalities) and the control of the schools. This decree, which greatly diminished the autonomy of the Municipality, was issued by surprise, and permitted the government to found a new office (the so-called *Council of the Lieutenancy*) which it promptly filled with Slav clerks.

This office, in its turn, was instrumental in extending the Slav propaganda by arbitrarily granting industrial and commercial licences to Slavs and withholding them systematically from Italians. In order to found still another office in which to install Slav employés the government, without the slightest cause, in 1913 also deprived the Trieste Municipality of the collectorship of taxes. We will omit, for the sake of brevity, other innumerable and intolerable acts of injustice which reduced the so-called autonomy of the Trieste Municipality to a hollow farce.

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Baron Burian (1), after having declared that the conditions of the Italians were satisfactory from

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(1) Green book. Document of April 29, N. 75.

every point of view, stated that Trieste had always been the object of special care and solicitude on the part of the Imperial and Royal Government, which would continue in future, naturally in the interest of the state itself, to favour its material and intellectual progress, in conformity with the wishes of the population. It would be difficult to find so barefaced an instance of downright lying, even in the other false statements made by the Central Powers in their diplomatic publications before and after the war. Not merely years or decades, but over a century of Triestin history constitutes a consistent, uninterrupted, uncontrovertible denial of Baron Burian's words.

We need not here repeat the evidence (1) amply proving that the Austrian government has deliberately and continually neglected the commercial interests of Trieste, and that the development and flourishing condition of its port is solely due to its inhabitants, for these are well known and undeniable facts. In numerous books and pamphlets written in 1848 and in 1866, and even in 1913 on the very eve of the war, the Triestins have amply proved that the prosperity of the port has been due to causes which have had nothing to do with Austrian rule.

An American Consul, Mr. A. W. Thayer (2),

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(1) PITACCO, *Sulle condizioni degli Italiani in Austria* (Trieste, 1912); M. ALBERTI, *Trieste e la sua fisiologia economica* (Rome, 1916).

(2) THAYER, *The commercial future of Trieste*, Report to the U. S. Ambassador, Mr. J. Jay (Trieste, 1872).

has stated that the causes of the prosperity of Trieste have been :

a) Its geographical position, which renders it the most inland port of south-eastern Europe.

b) The energy and enterprising spirit of its inhabitants.

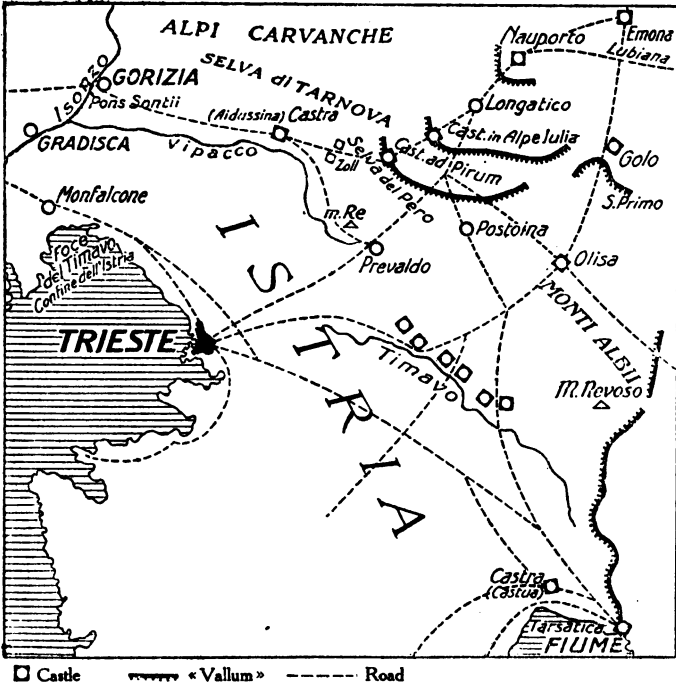
The American Consul further wrote that the port prospered and progressed « in spite of the depressing action of the Austrian government's policy ». Also in the last few years, although the trade of their port had greatly increased (in 1913 the total of imports and exports amounted to 6,147,220 tons, representing the value of 3,460,600 000 crowns), the Triestins were able to prove that their commerce had a special Italian-Levantine character, namely that it derived its importance mainly from its trade with Italy and the Levant. Austria has devoted little or no attention to the prosperity of Trieste; indeed the latter was seriously damaged by the 1906 tariff, and the river policy inaugurated after 1910 threatened its very existence.

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But there is another field in which the Austrian government took « particular pains » to create « a satisfactory existence » for the Italians and to develop their moral progress; we allude to that of the police, with its political persecutions. As in the Lombardo-Veneto down to 1866, so also latterly in Julian Venetia, the police has been the motive and irradiating centre of politics, and the political police has been constantly the key to the



ROMAN FORTRESSES ON THE EASTERN ALPS.



whole mechanism of state. The police invaded all fields of activity and penetrated everywhere.

The police passed like a Juggernaut over the public life of the population, dissolving national associations and harmless clubs; preventing congresses, lectures and sporting meetings; it put an end to the career of hundreds of young men, compiling reports on their political leanings which either caused their dismissal from the government offices and schools, or prevented them from ever obtaining employment there.

Moreover, the Austrian police thought nothing of breaking into citizens' houses with the pretext of searching them, and they plunged into grief and misery thousands of families by the wholesale arrests « en masse » which they effected during the national manifestations, by incessant political arrests, and by constantly engineering high treason trials. Taking undue advantage of a charter granted in 1854, the police in the course of a few years sentenced for alleged political crimes thousands of citizens to terms of imprisonment varying from seven to fourteen days.

These penalties were inflicted by police commissioners without the slightest form of trial, and without offering an opportunity for the accused to defend themselves. As though this monstrous proceeding were not sufficient, all those who had thus been sentenced to terms of imprisonment by the police, were again hauled up before the regular magistrates on emerging from prison, and in most cases they received a second sentence. They were thus punished twice for one and the

same crime which was almost always imaginary ! Besides these abominable methods, others were used which differed but little from the mediaeval practices of torture; the unfortunate victims were suddenly awakened at dead of night and thus, still half-dazed, subjected to a severe and harassing cross-examination, often in the presence of their mothers or wives who were purposely introduced, with devilish cunning, to play on their feelings; undue advantage was thus taken of their over-wrought nerves. The Austrian police was incredibly relentless towards the Italians guilty of the heinous crime of Italianity. Personal liberty was almost non-existent. In a bold speech which he pronounced at the Parliament of Vienna, deputy Pitacco said: « An anonymous denunciation of the most trivial and absurd nature is often sufficient to throw into prison young students, and even persons belonging to the best social circles, who, although perfectly innocent, are deprived of their liberty for weeks and months ». Nor were women and young girls spared: from Carolina Placutta sent to jail in 1883 for having cried out « Viva l'Italia », to a little girl named Settomini, only 14 years of age, who was accused of *lèse majesté* by a Slovenian, and remained imprisoned for several days in the same cell where several prostitutes were detained (1).

Everybody can understand the pentup hatred which these brutal persecutions and acts of bestial violence have accumulated against Austria.

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(1) GAYDA, *L'Italia d'oltre confine* (Torino, 1914).

None of us can recall without a thrill of indignation the infamous trials for *lèse majesté* which were bolstered up by the police, without a shred of evidence, while the magistrates based their verdicts rather on the depositions of prostitutes, if detrimental to the defendants, than on the sworn evidence of respectable citizens. The slightest and most insignificant act which might be supposed to have a remote political significance, resulted almost invariably in the arrest of its author: a young man was imprisoned for wearing a tricolour ribbon on his hat, and an old gentleman was sentenced to a term of imprisonment because he had allowed his daughter to play the hymn of Garibaldi on her piano.

The police did not scruple to publicly manifest its partizanship in favour of the Slavs. Besides the instances which we have already quoted, we may add that in 1912 the police authorities forbade the Congress of the Federation of Italian school-teachers at Pola, while only a few days later it allowed the Congress of Slav school-teachers to be held at Trieste. On another occasion they adopted the system of allowing the Slav newspapers to boycott Italian tradesmen while the Italian newspapers were strictly forbidden to boycott Slav tradesmen. By recruiting the policemen exclusively among Slavs, the police authorities obtained magnificent results, especially during nationalist demonstrations, when the Italians paraded the streets to protest against the Slavs or to try to punish the Slovenes who had provoked them; in these cases the policemen ent-

ered into the fray not as agents of the law and of public order, but essentially as Slavs, namely as the sworn enemies of the Italians. It is easy to understand the brutal violence and the letting loose of pentup hate to which such a condition of things gave rise. The Slav police charged the crowd with drawn swords and with heavy bludgeons, and adopted all the worst and most reactionary methods of absolutism.

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As a result of all these violent proceedings and political persecutions, and of the denationalizing activity of the Austrian government, which was always on the increase, the national situation and the political condition of the Italians had become intolerable and untenable. If we consider impartially the immense difficulties which the Italian national cause had to contend against and the vast force of expansion of the Slav race following a frankly imperialistic programme, we cannot fail to come to the conclusion that the stage at which the problem of the Italians under Austrian rule had arrived in 1914, was particularly critical, not to say decisive.

From Italy's standpoint, the question of the Julian Region carried with it the menace that the Nation might never secure its rightful frontiers as far as the Julian Alps, thus laying itself open to an invasion and to the definite settlement of the Slav in Italy. Besides, this question represented a continual danger to the home policy, as the sympathies of free Italians towards their brothers in

bondage became daily more ardent and restless, giving rise to imposing popular demonstrations. The university question with the bloody disturbances of Innsbruck, of Gratz and of Vienna, where many Italian students were severely wounded with sticks and swords by Germans simply because they asked for an Italian University; the famous decrees issued by Hohenlohe, and the last bloody episodes in the national struggle which took place at Trieste, had already stirred and moved to indignation the whole of Italy. Irredentism, leaving the romantic and sentimental phase for a more practical and positive stage under the impulse of a unitarian national consciousness, and even more from reaction against Austrian persecution, had succeeded in winning over to its ideals many of Italy's leading political men.

And it was impossible for Austria to avoid reaping the harvest of her infamous policy.

The sensation of an impending peril, of the imminent danger of being crushed and overpowered, haunted the minds of all. Even optimists were less confident in view of the evident impossibility of stemming the ever increasing current of Austrian violence. The Italians subject to Austrian rule fought their battles magnificently, with superb faith and enthusiasm, with marvellous unity and with unrivalled generosity in contributing towards the institutes of national defence. The results were often almost miraculous. But after every defeat, as after every victory, the anxious question arose in the minds of all: *What will*

*tomorrow bring?* The fate of a part of Istria and the threatening situation of Friuli increased the pressure of fear and anxiety. Everybody was confronted with visions of an Italianity politically doomed to crumble and disappear, for the efforts put forth by Austria and the Slavs during the preceding five years had been tremendous.

Owing to these facts, the struggle between Italians and Slavs in Julian Venetia, which to a superficial observer might have appeared a simple fight for the possession of a frontier, had assumed of late years the character of a struggle for existence for the Italians; the desperate struggle of a people who saw only one way towards freedom, namely by means of a war which they did not know whether to invoke or to deprecate, as they fully understood the risks to their country.

The Triestins and Istrians have sacrificed themselves for several decades waiting patiently like soldiers who, having been placed in an advanced post, are ordered to hold out as long as possible, at all costs. The Italians of Fiume and Dalmatia have also resisted heroically. But during the last few years deputations to Rome became more frequent and appeals to political men more pressing: *it was impossible to hold out any longer* was the general cry. Italy was bound to intervene for the rights of liberty down-trodden by Austria, and in defence of offended national dignity.

The Italians, isolated and alone, were confronted by the Slavs formidably organized and backed by all the other nationalities. It was a racial clash: the Latin race as represented by less than 450

thousand Italians, the Slav race by a compact organization consisting of many millions of Slavs of all kinds, bound together by their traditional policy of expansion and backed and supported by Austria.

A Slovene newspaper published in Trieste openly declared: « We shall not desist from the struggle before we have reduced to dust underneath our feet the Italianity of Trieste. We shall not stop fighting until we hold full sway over Trieste, we, the Slovenes, we, the Slavs ! ».

The leading Slav political associations established at Trieste were the Slovene *Edinost*, the Serb *Srpska citalnica*, the Croatian *Dalmatinski skup* and the Bohemian *Ceska beseda*, all under the direct control of the Austrian government. Without the aid of the government they would have been powerless against the strong national sentiment and the disciplined organization of the Italians.

The Italians of Julian Venetia were isolated by dire necessity. Every act of sympathy and brotherly help received from other Italians, especially from the Italians of the Kingdom, was regarded as a political crime. Citizens and students were sentenced to terms of imprisonment whenever it was discovered that they were in correspondence with the *Dante Alighieri Society*; Italian clubs and associations suspected of being subsidized by the Italian government had their offices minutely searched and were threatened with all the rigours of the law. On some rare occasions, for instance when Crispi was in power, the Italian



government had attempted to intervene, but such intervention was regarded as a hostile act at Vienna and was not tolerated. The Italians of Julian Venetia were thus forced to remain in complete isolation.

The most important organization for the defence of Italianity was the *Lega Nazionale* or National League, to which the Triestins contributed in late years several millions in small offerings. It was justly said that Italian patriotism was their religion and the *Lega Nazionale* their church. Rich and poor, young and old, all gave generously in proportion to their means. The thought of the *Lega* was uppermost in the minds of the Triestins and often it represented the last expression of the will of dying men. A physician who was about to undergo an operation made a will leaving the *Lega Nazionale* heir to all his property. A municipal employé, before committing suicide, wrote to his mother asking her to sell his books and give the proceeds to the *Lega*. A poor little seamstress, Maria Sterni, on her death-bed begged her mother to offer the last money which she had earned, to the *Lega Nazionale*. At the annual meetings of the association, when the patriotism and generosity of its members shone forth in all its significance, it was possible to understand and appreciate the great spiritual force which formed the bulwark of Julian Venetia. The fundamental principle of this defence was to hold at all costs the national positions inherited through two thousand years of Italian history, till the day in which Italy should be able to intervene in order to liberate her unredeemed provinces.

Under Prince Hohenlohe, during the period which immediately preceded the war, the Slovenes had invaded Friuli as far as the very frontier of the Kingdom of Italy. Buying up lands and property, exploiting the poverty of the inhabitants, obtaining from the government numerous industrial concessions and the removal of Italian employés, going so far as to persuade the government to dismiss the *regnicoli* workmen from the Monfalcone ship-building yard and to replace them with Slavs, they had succeeded in penetrating into Lower Friuli, extending from thence to Cormons and Monfalcone, where they had already established schools and other institutions. In Istria they had asked for an administrative reform by which they wished at all costs to establish Slav communities on the coast of the Julian Region which was still entirely in the hands of Italian Municipalities. Had they succeeded, the situation in the interior would have become even more tragically serious for the Italians. Let us once more mention the towns and villages which are purely Italian: Pisino, Pinguente and Rozzo, ruled over by Croatian municipal administrations and obliged to sustain a continual struggle against them, as if the Italians were besieged in their stronghold by the Slavs swarming over the whole countryside. The situation is truly anachronistic, reproducing in the twentieth century the same conditions which obtained during the transmigration of peoples. By her anti-Italian policy, Austria gave Julian Venetia the aspect of a country in a mediaeval

state. Other townships, such as Piemonte, Portole, Confanaro, San Vincenti, San Vincenzo del Pasanatico, were havens of refuge for Italianity and still in possession of the Italians, but wholly isolated in the midst of the country occupied by Slavs.

The internal situation of some of these towns was such that, as the Bishop had imposed Slav priests for the purpose of carrying on the Slav propaganda, the Italian peasants, although deeply religious, refused to allow their children to be baptized or their dead accompanied to the grave by the Slav priest. It often happened that the priest would intone the prayers of the liturgy in the Slav language while the congregation, as a sign of protest, drowned his voice with Italian hymns and prayers.

The situation was indeed extremely precarious. The patriots themselves admitted that if they succeeded in keeping their heads above water and sometimes achieved a real victory, it was *by a pure miracle*. It was a miracle of the national faith, a miracle created by hatred of the Austrian persecutors. What compromise was possible between the Italians and the Austrian government? None! The Italians would not and could not give up territories or parts of territories which they knew, by ancient tradition, that they had to defend in the name of the whole Italian Nation, waiting for the day in which the Nation would return and resume possession of them. Austrian Slavism, pushed onward by violent forces could not and would not, either turn back,

or check its advance. Thus *even before the war* only two final solutions seemed possible for Julian Venetia, Italy's remotest province, and for the whole of the eastern Adriatic: *either the death of Italianity or the elimination of foreign rule.*



One of the fundamental motives of the Italian war, which is a war of civilization, of national independence and of democratic liberty, must be sought in the problem of Julian Venetia. Italy wishes to regain her natural frontiers, which to the east are the Julian Alps. She yearns to liberate her brothers from Austrian slavery and oppression. She looks forward to the extermination of tyranny existing in Europe.

The unredeemed Italians of Julian Venetia have cooperated in this war with passionate enthusiasm, unmindful of sacrifices. In the first place they have the great merit, as many illustrious Italians have recognized, of having fought and struggled to maintain alive in Italy the hatred against the barbarity of Austria in particular, and of the Teutons in general. When the unfortunate war of 1866 left them at the mercy of Austria they swore that they would carry on the struggle for freedom from the foreign yoke; and their struggle took the name of irredentism. It spread and developed also in Italy where two great poets, Carducci first and then D'Annunzio, gave it its most solemn and ardent expression. But the real battlefield was in the Julian Region. The

Italians of Eastern Friuli, of Trieste and of Istria expressed in every manner and on all occasions their firm wish that Austria should evacuate the territories which did not belong to her and where she had sown all the noxious germs of tyranny and oppression. Some of the acts by which the unredeemed provinces manifested their desire to break from Austria have remained famous. In 1861 the Istrian Diet was asked to elect two deputies for the Vienna Diet: when the vote was taken, all the tickets bore the word *nobody*.

From 1873 to 1897 Trieste persistently refused to send representatives to Vienna, and when in 1897, owing to the nationalist struggle it was thought advisable to change tactics, Trieste sent to Vienna exclusively irredentist deputies, explicitly stating, however, that this did not in any way imply a formal recognition of the Austrian government. The Italians of Julian Venetia who had freely given their blood in the epic struggles of the Risorgimento, suffered deeply to see that the Germans and Slavs continued to hold sway over their own Italian province. They failed to understand why a part of Venetia should be free while the remaining part was still a slave to the foreigner, and they considered it as contrary to all principles of real civilization that a little stream, the Indri, should divide into two states, the members of one and the same family, the component parts of a region that had the same history, the same civilization, the same national soul. And they fought on bravely, on the one hand to prove that Austrian rule continued in their land

completely against their will, and on the other to keep the fire of patriotism and the irredentist ideal alight in the hearts of all Italians.

When the European war broke out, the Italians of Julian Venetia proved how deeply rooted was their love for Italy and how fierce their hatred against the Austrian oppressors. Those who were forcibly enlisted and sent to fight in Galicia and in Serbia surrendered *en masse*, not wishing to further the cause of the arch-enemy of their nationality and not recognizing Austria as their country. Many hundreds of these deserters subsequently came to Italy asking to enlist in the national army. Those who had not been sent to the colours by Austria immediately on the beginning of the war in August 1914, gladly risked imprisonment, endless sufferings and privations and death itself in order to pass the frontier and enlist in thousands in the Italian army. Only the heroism with which the Belgians attempt to cross the Dutch frontier is comparable to that of the Italians of Julian Venetia fleeing from Austria into Italy and braving a thousand dangers.

During the ten months of Italian neutrality the emigration from the Julian region contributed a large number of orators and writers to the irredentist cause. Numerous young men fought with the Garibaldians in the Argonne in France. A Triestin, Mario Veber, taken prisoner by the Prusians was by them handed over to the Austrians who hanged him at Linz.

When Italy entered the war, the irredentists of Julian Venetia, who had deserted or emigrated

into Italy, enlisted *en masse*. Thousands of volunteers, Friulans, Gorizians, Istrians, Triestins are fighting against Austria. There is not a single Italian regiment which does not number irredentist volunteers in its ranks. Their valour has become traditional. One of them, naval lieutenant Nazario Sauro, of Capodistria, whom the Austrians took prisoner at sea and hanged at Pola with consummate cruelty in the presence of his mother and sister, is not only a glorious martyr, but has become a popular hero and a symbol for the Italian navy. But how many other irredentist heroes have given their lives for the Italian cause! Giacomo Venezian, Spiro Tipaldo Xydias, Guido Brunner, Ugo Polonio, to whose memory was awarded the rare distinction of the gold medal for bravery; Pio Gambini, Emo Tarabocchia, Ruggero Fauro, Scipio Slataper, Giuseppe Vidali, Sillani, Valerio, Zanetti, Gramaticopulo, Zelco, Carniel, Reiss, Zotti, Prister, and so many others! Many young Gorizians fell in Cadorna's ranks on the taking of Gorizia. Istrian sailors pilot the Italian and allied submarines and warships in the Adriatic. The aureola of martyrdom crowns the head of the Triestin Dino Fonda, taken prisoner before Gorizia by the Austrians and hanged.

What is the condition of Julian Venetia during the war? The persecutions against the Italians have reached an incredible degree of violence. Tens of thousands of inhabitants have been torn from their homes and shut up in the horrible concentration camps. The terroristic fury of the Aus-

trians knows no bounds. A Viennese paper stated in March 1917 that since the beginning of the war over three hundred death sentences had been pronounced at Trieste. Surely Trieste and the Julian Region, after the long and glorious martyrdom which they have suffered for the sake of Italy from 1799 to 1917, after having given so many heroes to the war, after the last three years of atrocious suffering and terrible persecutions, may believe that they have offered to the cause of national liberty more martyrs and champions of their rights than any other region of Italy. And it is for this reason that the whole Italian nation, while fighting its formidable and most difficult war, has its eyes fixed with ardent and constant love on Trieste, on Friuli, on Istria.

No other revendication of the peoples now fighting against the Germans is more sanctified than this by faith, blood, and justice.





**POLA - Roman arch of the Sergi. known as the  
Golden Gate.**



**FIUME - View of the city on the Quarnaro.**

## CHAPTER VI.

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### FIUME.

**T**he city of Fiume, which is situated on the eastern shore of the Quarnero, at the upper end of the Istrian peninsula, belongs geographically to Istria and therefore, like Istria, to Julian Venetia.

It lies on the near side of the great Alpine ridge which separates the rivers flowing into the Adriatic from those flowing into the Danube, and which, following the same direction as the snowy heights of the Albii Mountains, slopes down to the sea by the Morlacca Channel and the promontory of Cape Dubno (1).

For many centuries Fiume was regarded as forming part of Istria, the fact that it belonged to the See of Pola from 1028 to 1771 being an additional reason for this view; in the latter year, however, Empress Maria Theresa united Fiume and its immediate surroundings to Hungary, since

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(1) G. INVERARDI, *Per l'italianità geografica del Quarnero*, Rome, 1917.

which time, with the exception of a brief period of Croatian rule from 1848 to 1867, it has formed part, as a separate entity, of the Kingdom of Hungary and is politically divided from Istria, which belongs to Austria.

This separation from their brethren of the other unredeemed provinces placed the Italians of Fiume in a position of dangerous isolation during the struggles for the preservation of their nationality which took place during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and had results which are felt to this day. For many a long year this isolation meant oblivion as well, and Fiume, although engaged in the same struggle against a common foe, felt herself « an exile even in the exile of her sisters ».

At first, however, her lot seemed to be a somewhat happier one. The Magyars were supposed to be better than they have ever been in reality. Both in Italy and in other countries they had made capital of the fact that Hungarians had been numbered among Garibaldi's famous Thousand in the struggle for Italian independence. The Hungarians were, therefore, supposed to be friendly to Italy and likely to allow their Italian subjects to live in liberty. For these reasons the Italian patriots of the nineteenth century omitted the name of Fiume from their programme of national revendication.

Today we have ceased to cherish any illusions about Hungarian liberalism and we have discovered that the Magyars are the most trusty allies of Teutonic aggression. We are no longer ignorant

of their innumerable acts of oppression of the unfortunate races subject to their rule, and Fiume is no less dear to the Italian heart than Trieste and Trent. Fiume too is regarded as an inalienable part of the national heritage, and Italy is resolved to deliver her from the foreign yoke and fully realizes that every affront to the rights and liberties of the Italians of Fiume is an affront not only to Italy but to the whole civilized world. When these circumstances and the position of Fiume are taken into consideration, it will be seen that the question of that city cannot be divorced from the larger question of Julian Venetia. Owing to its peculiar political conditions, the question of Fiume presents certain characteristics which make it necessary to treat it separately, which is not necessary, for instance, in the case of Pola, important as is that city from a naval point of view.

From a political and economic standpoint the Fiume problem is closely connected with that of Trieste. If we take for granted that the war will end in victory, a victory which will ratify Italy's undisputed right to Trieste, the question of Fiume becomes of such importance that upon its right solution may to a certain extent depend the future lot of that new Europe, which the Entente Powers and the United States hope to see arise out of the ruins of Austro-German militarism.

This may seem an exaggerated statement, but it is not difficult to prove that the Central Empires, foreseeing their own defeat, a defeat made still more certain by the intervention of the Unit-

ed States, hope, by preserving a direct or indirect hold upon Fiume, to keep open one of the commercial routes to the East. We must not lose sight of the fact that the real economic motive of this cruel war was the Austro-German plan for getting possession of the Eastern markets, and we must bear in mind that as long as any one of the routes to the East remains open, Teutonic *Mitteleuropa* will do everything in its power to resume its efforts in that direction.

Herein lies the importance of the Fiume question.

There are two routes from central Europe to the East; one crosses the Balkan peninsula and leads to Salonica, or else continues via Constantinople and Bagdad to the Persian Gulf. The Berlin to Bagdad Orient Express was the great scheme which Germany hoped would materialize after her victory in the present war. Had this plan succeeded, German hegemony over the world would have been an accomplished fact.

The other route is via the Adriatic; it is quick and convenient, and while it does not admit of the rapid realization of vast plans, it would afford the Central European Powers every opportunity of laying fresh snares in the future.

It is absolutely necessary therefore that some Great Power should undertake to bar every outlet in this direction. Fiume is one of the most important of these outlets and there seems to be some danger of its being left open. To prevent this it should be given into the custody of Italy. An Italian Fiume makes for the interest not only

of Italy, but of the whole civilized world, being contrary to the interests of German militarism (1).

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The argument of interests, which in the case in question are not wholly of a moral order, and the demand that these interests shall be the decisive factor in the solution of the problem are hardly likely to carry conviction to those who think of Right in the abstract and demand that it shall triumph in a settlement of Europe, carried out on the principle of nationality. We must bear in mind that such people care little whether the possession of Fiume is essential to Italy and useful to her allies or not. The United States joined the Allies asserting by the mouth of President Wilson that they intended to work for the triumph of Right and Justice without demanding any compensation for their assistance. An American citizen might well say: « I neither know nor care about your private interests. All I care to know with regard to the question of Fiume and the wishes of Italy as to that city is whether Italy has any real claim to the possession of Fiume ».

In answer to such an observation it might well be said that necessity has often been held to be sufficient justification of such a claim, but in the case of Fiume a real right exists. If the criteria of the principle of nationality are to be the only decisive factors in the future settlement of

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(1) ARMANDO HODNIG, *Fiume italiana e la sua funzione antigermanica*. Rome, Athenaeum, 1917.

Europe, Fiume could not be assigned to any other Power without doing violence to this very principle.

Before continuing this argument, we must make sure that we have a clear understanding of the essence of this principle.

According to one German theory, Europe when divided according to the principle of nationality, should consist of as many separate states as there are races. The Central Empires make use of this theory to prove on the one hand that their enemies do not act upon it and on the other that the principle itself is purely Utopian. It is therefore obvious that identity of speech does not alone constitute a nation. Were this the case, France, for instance, would have no right to Alsace, where at least 80 per cent of the inhabitants are German-speaking; Switzerland as a state ought not to exist; a part of Belgium should belong to France: Russia should be split up into a score of states of different sizes, and so forth.

An Italian minister, Pasquale Stanislao Mancini, who was the first to formulate a theory of the principle of nationality, laid down as the basis of this principle a common national consciousness born of common history, traditions and geographical position. Space will not allow us to examine in greater detail the profound conception of Mancini or to compare it with the popular principle of sovereignty so prevalent today (1).

(1) An interesting study upon Mancini and the principle of nationality was published by senator Francesco Ruffini in the *Nuova Antologia* of March 16, 1917.



Let us however accept the prevalent conception and define the *principle of nationality as the right of each people to decide its own destinies.*

How are we to arrive at a knowledge of the real will of each people? The plebiscite? France refuses to accept it in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine and Servia in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Why? Because the oppressors of these subject countries have distorted their original physiognomy both by banishing and deporting the native population and by artificial immigration; because, moreover, they possess so many means of crushing the will of their subjects, and because private interests of a material nature will sometimes make individuals short-sighted.

France appeals to the wishes of the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine as expressed in the famous Proclamation of Bordeaux in 1871. What the Germans have done in the interim to denationalize the two provinces, simply does not count, any more than what has been done with the same end in view by Austria in Dalmatia since 1797.

At Fiume, if the majority of the 30,000 Italians who inhabited that city in 1914, as against less than 15,000 Slavs and 6,000 Magyars, were not either dead, banished or scattered, a plebiscite organized even by the authorities would undoubtedly be favorable to Italy. But since such a thing is out of the question, those desirous of knowing the will of the citizens of Fiume must turn to history for their reply, a reply which will be given with no uncertain voice, by the most remote centuries and by recent years alike.

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The essentially Italian character of Fiume dates back to the days of the Roman Empire. In the time of Pliny the Elder, namely during the first fifty years of the first century of the Christian era, a Roman city called Tarsactica stood on the site of modern Fiume. The earliest mention of this city is made by Pliny himself in a list of the walled towns existing at that time on the coast of Istria and Liburnia. The city was situated just where great ramparts, provided with watch-towers, constructed by Roman military engineers for the defence of this Alpine frontier, ran down to the sea along the banks of the Fiumara, a river which today forms the boundary line between Fiume and Croatia.

A little town with a mediaeval castle which stands on a hill on the opposite bank of the Fiumara still bears a slightly modified version of the ancient name — Tarsatto.

For long it was thought that Tarsatto stood upon the site of the ancient Tarsactica, but archaeological discoveries made in February 1914 proved that the ancient city was situated on the site of the present Fiume. The ancient city was destroyed by Charlemagne about the year 800 and the Italian city rose upon its ruins at some later, but unknown period. A long time, of which history tells us almost nothing, elapsed between the destruction of the ancient city and the rise of its successor. Of this period we merely know that

the district was invaded, and the unguarded Roman fortifications demolished, by Slav tribes of *Corvati* driven out of Poland and Galicia by other migrant peoples. We do, however, know that *Tarsactica* succeeded in retaining its Latin character and that an Italian city rose from its ruins. During these recordless ages the process of development which was to convert Romans into Italians was gradually being accomplished, just as in other parts of Italy where the number of invading barbarians was proportionately smaller.

The first document mentioning the existence of the Italian commune dates from the thirteenth century. From it we learn that even before the year 1000 the little maritime city was a fief of the bishopric of Pedena, and later, as we have already mentioned, of the See of Pola, by which it was enfeoffed in 1139 in the domains of the dynasty of Duino.

The vicissitudes of this period are, however, of no particular importance. The little maritime city lived its own life unchanged despite changes of feudal lords. No matter whether the Duinati, the Walsees or the Habsburgs were in power, the city governed itself according to its own laws which were based on the laws of ancient Rome, and it is interesting to note from the documents which have come down to us that the language of their fathers was already jealously cherished, and that every care was taken that it should not be lost through association with the Slav population of the surrounding country. Its use was specially provided for in school and church. No language but

Latin or Italian has ever been used in public documents, in the registrar's books, or in the administration of justice. Frequently both have been used, the one to explain the other. The books read were Italian, the clergy preached to the people in Italian, so that within the walls of the city the Italian spirit and language found a congenial soil and gradually absorbed all the foreign elements which found their way in. Moreover the Italian language spread from the city into the country and gradually transformed the uncouth tongue of the Slav peasantry. There was great pressure from without, but the little Italian nucleus showed marvellous powers of resistance, in spite of the fact that the assistance given to the other centres on the eastern Adriatic by the domination of Venice was wholly lacking in the case of Fiume.

The sway of Venice over Fiume lasted only for a year (1508-1509) and met with hostility from the inhabitants. The Italian dialect spoken at Fiume is none the less of the Venetian type, a phenomenon which can only be explained by attributing this resemblance in the Venetian dialects spoken in Fiume and throughout the eastern Adriatic to a common Latin origin.

We have mentioned these points in order to show the instinctive consciousness of their origin, one might almost say, of their *raison d'être*, possessed by the people of Fiume. Rome built Tarsactica to guard the ramparts erected for the defence of her Alpine frontier, and the citizens of Fiume in defending their nationality are but con-

tinuing the task of their forefathers, in expectation of the day when Rome shall return and plant her banners on the natural frontier of Italy.

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Everything we know of the ancient history of Fiume proves the determination of her citizens to remain Italian, a determination which is confirmed by their recent history. When, in August 1848, the Croats, who had joined forces with the Austrians against revolutionary Hungary, took military possession of the city of Fiume, their leader, a certain Bunjevac, the representative of the Ban of Croatia, recognizing the nationality of the inhabitants, promised to respect the city's municipal liberties and the use of the Italian language. The people of Fiume, however, knowing that they could not trust the promises of the invader, resisted by every means in their power, nor could their spirit be broken by nineteen years of continual oppression. Persecution, imprisonment, bloody measures of repression, could not put an end to the repeated protests of the municipality against « any and every annexation to Croatia ». Failing to overcome the resistance of the representatives of the people, the Croatian governor tried to influence the people themselves. He drew up a list of electors and invited the citizens to elect deputies to represent them at the Diet of Zagabria. Eight hundred and seventy people voted and 840 voting papers bore the single word: « No one ». The attempt was renewed, with a like result, while on a third occasion three

quarters of the electors wrote under the names of the proposed deputies the direction: « *Let them protest against any and every annexation to Croatia* ».

When the Hungarians who succeeded the Croats in 1867 and were hailed as liberators, began to make attempts on the national character of Fiume, they met with an equally sturdy resistance. It was useless to try to wipe out twenty centuries of Latin civilization in a few years, and the attempt was doomed to failure from the beginning. The Hungarian government tried to attain its end by colonization. They began by installing a regular army of bureaucrats; the postal and telegraphic services, the customs and tax offices, schools, railways, public works and banks were all crowded with Hungarian officials. The government thus created an electorate which could be trusted to obey. This, however, did not suffice. The struggles of daily life only served to strengthen the conscience of the Italians, whose commerce and industries served as so many weapons of defence. The government then determined to turn its attention to the realm of intellect by making the higher schools thoroughly Hungarian, and refusing admission to these schools to all who were not ready to renounce their own nationality, and by making the study of the Hungarian language compulsory, and appointing Magyars to teach Italian, with the object of corrupting and debasing the language. They also attacked the Italians in the economic field by setting up unfair competition, reducing their profits by means of

legal trickery, depriving them of all power of initiative and opening banks and shops which drained away the economic life blood of the « rebels ». The government even went so far as to make its police organize faked dynamite plots, so as to have a pretext for imprisoning those citizens who were the staunchest opponents of its system.

These manoeuvres too were fruitless. Although the government so manipulated the list of municipal electors that in 1914 the six thousand Hungarians who had settled at Fiume during the last twenty years disposed of 1100 votes, while the other 44,000 inhabitants only had 1200, the municipality yet contrived to remain Italian (1).

We see then that we have no need of new plebiscites to ascertain the will of the people of Fiume. History, both ancient and modern, shows clearly that Fiume has always desired to be Italian, a desire which is stronger than ever today, and she is determined that her sons who left their homes that they might not be forced to serve in the ranks of their oppressors, and lost their lives fighting in the ranks of the Italian army for Right and Justice and the deliverance of their people, shall not have died in vain.

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From what we have already said, it is obvious that the triumph of Right and Justice consequent on the defeat of the Germanic Alliance necessarily means that Fiume cannot be assigned to either

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(1) F. E. SPINELLI, *Il calvario d'una città italiana*. Bergamo, 1914.

Croatia or Hungary, since such a course would be contrary to the expressed wishes of its inhabitants. No weight can be attached to the objection that Fiume is not the whole of the Liburnian region, and that the surrounding country is for the most part inhabited by Slav peasantry. This population is only a small one, since the Liburnian Carso, like the Friulian, is very sparsely populated; moreover, the vote of an illiterate peasant, devoid of national consciousness, who has never spontaneously expressed any ambition beyond that of remaining in undisturbed possession of his little plot of ground, can hardly be regarded as equivalent to that of a citizen whose whole life is dedicated to the preservation of his nationality. This is an assertion which will scarcely be disputed by any sincere and intelligent person.

The only arguments then, which can be urged against the right of Italy to the possession of Fiume, are those of a political nature, which necessarily exclude the question of right. Supposing, for instance, that the Allies were forced to make an inconclusive peace with the Central Powers, and Austria-Hungary consequently should succeed in remaining an anti-national state, under the Habsburg rule, composed of the Czech countries, German Austria, Hungary and Croatia, the surviving Habsburg state might claim as a right (one of those rights born of necessity) to have an outlet to the sea and demand Fiume. Of course, when we take such possibilities into account, nothing can be regarded as certain, and our arguments must be based upon the foregone conclusion of



the victory of the Allies. We must therefore suppose that Austria-Hungary will be split up into its ethnical component parts: a Czech-Slovak kingdom, an Austria and a Hungary reduced to their ethnographical territories, and either an independent Croatia or one united to Servia.

Which of these states could lay claim to Fiume on the ground of real and undeniable economic necessity?

The Czech countries are about seven kilometres from Fiume and could only be connected with it by means of a passage crossing Austria or Hungary from north to south; a similar passage, though somewhat shorter, would be necessary in order to connect Austria and Hungary with Fiume, the former passage crossing Carniola, the latter Croatia. Such a plan is, however, hardly likely to be taken into serious consideration. The only remaining country which could be placed in direct communication with Fiume, is Croatia.

As we have already remarked, we can think of Croatia either as an independent state, or as joined to Servia. In the former case we should have a state numbering at most three million inhabitants and possessing very little industry or commerce. Croatia contributed only four per cent of the total import and export trade passing through the port of Fiume. How then can Croatia lay claim to a great port like Fiume on the ground of necessity, or urge that the principle of nationality must be set aside in order to provide her with such a port? It should also be borne in mind that Croatia possesses 140 kilometres, of coast-line

stretching from Point Dubno to Obrovazzo, a coast to which no one disputes her right. On this coast are the ports of Novi, Segna and Carlopago, which are more than sufficient for all Croatia's requirements. The port of Segna in particular could be much enlarged and is most favourably situated, since it is some twenty kilometres nearer than Fiume to the Croatian railway junction of Ogulin. If instead of becoming an independent state, Croatia were united to Servia, Fiume would be still less necessary to her, since in addition to the three ports mentioned above, she would profit by the commercial outlet possessed by Servia on the Adriatic.

We are thus forced to the conclusion that both Fiume and Trieste must be placed at the service of the new states which will rise on the ruins of the Habsburg monarchy, but without being taken from their rightful owner, Italy, and we may be sure that Italy will make every necessary and fair economic concession to these new states.

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We have so far established two main facts — that Fiume rightly belongs to Italy, and that this right cannot be invalidated on the ground of the essential requirements of other peoples, unless the Allies are forced to be content with an incomplete victory.

To this we may add that, even were there no Italians at Fiume who were firmly resolved to become Italian subjects, even if history, geography and justice did not clearly point out the equit-



ZARA - Cathedral.



**SEBENICO - The Duomo.**

able solution of the problem, the interests of the Entente Powers would still demand the cession of Fiume to Italy.

We have already said that the Adriatic is one of the great trade routes between Central Europe and the East. Germany, the ally of Austria and Turkey, has in the past aimed at the conquest of the markets of the Levant, and she would certainly do so again should she be victorious in this war. During the war Germany, on whom her allies are dependent for the sinews of war, has succeeded in setting up that blockade which, by cutting Europe in half would, if made permanent, be a perpetual menace to the peace of Europe. Peace without annexations would amount in the case of Germany to the practical conquest of Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, though under the form of mere supremacy. In the interests of future peace this blockade must then be broken up and rendered innocuous. Germany is not a Mediterranean Power. She has her natural economic outlets on the North Sea, to which she is almost exclusively indebted for the economic prosperity which she has attained during the last forty years. Any claim laid by Germany to the Mediterranean is of a purely imperialistic nature and, as such, dangerous to the peace of the future. Whether she aspires to Trieste, or strives to colonize Asia Minor, she is poaching on the preserves of other nations and inevitably provokes clashes and conflicts. If such disputes are to be avoided in the future, the Central European blockade must be broken up by resolving Austria-

Hungary into its ethnical elements according to the principle of nationality; the way to the Balkans must be barred by the setting up of a greater Serbia and Roumania, and by making Russia the guardian of the Dardanelles; finally Germany must be prevented from obtaining access whether direct or indirect, to the Adriatic.

Germany had for long cast a covetous eye on Trieste, as was intimated by Prince Bülow when he still had hopes of buying Italy's neutrality.

If then we assume that Trieste, Istria and Dalmatia will be taken from Austria, when that country has been defeated, Germany must be prevented from carrying out at Fiume through either Austria, or some one of the states constructed on the ruins of Austria-Hungary, the schemes which she will have been forced to relinquish at Trieste. It would be a matter of indifference to Germany which of these plans she should succeed in accomplishing. Fiume and Trieste are but a short distance from one another; their hinterland is the same, while either would give her trade with the East the impetus it requires. Fiume in the hands of any other Power than the one possessing Trieste could annihilate the great economic advantage which the possession of Trieste offers to Italy and her allies, and would thus benefit Germany. This would be equally the case were Trieste to fall to Croatia or Hungary instead of to Germany or Austria. The guardianship of the Adriatic cannot be entrusted to a small Power without running a serious risk, since such a Power would not possess the means necessary for the efficient discharge of such a grave responsibility.

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We see then that the Fiume question is not merely one of Right and Justice, but a matter of the gravest moment both to Italy and to the whole of Europe; nor will the people of the United States, who have obeyed a generous impulse and intervened in the great conflict in order to hasten the triumph of civilization, wish the problem to be solved in any other way.

We are not dealing with those involuntary exaggerations to which combatants are prone, apt as they are to regard the enemy of today as the enemy of all time; no one wishes the conflict with Germany to last forever. It is quite possible that the German people is guilty of nothing worse than blind obedience to a bad government. We must moreover bear in mind that if the governments of the nations which are now pouring out their best blood in order to defend their countries from Germanic aggression had been more provident and more on their guard, this, the most terrible of all the wars which have scourged humanity, could probably have been avoided. Our tragic experience must at all events teach us to be watchful and far-sighted, but it is not necessary to humiliate any nation, not even our enemy, in order to attain that end. We must not deprive the vanquished of what is necessary to their existence, and we must see to it that the different problems which arise are equitably solved.

Granting this, there is but one solution of the Fiume question which can be termed worthy of

serious consideration — the solution which fulfils the expressed wishes of the inhabitants of the city on the Quarnero by uniting them to Italy, their Mother Country.

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## CHAPTER VII.

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### DALMATIA AND ITALY'S STRATEGIC PROBLEM IN THE ADRIATIC.

**T**he aspirations of Italy in the present war include not merely the reconquest of her natural and historical frontiers and the liberation of those of her children who are still groaning under the yoke of the oppressor, but also the solution of the Adriatic question, both with regard to the strategic defence of the coast of the peninsula, and the guardianship of the Italian element on the shore now belonging to Austria-Hungary.

The Adriatic problem is not easy to grasp, more especially for those who imagine that the Adriatic is a sea like the western Mediterranean, where four nations, Spain, France, Italy, and Great Britain, each possessing strong naval bases, can live peaceably and securely side by side; it must be borne in mind that the Adriatic is but a short strip of sea, a strip moreover whose Italian

shore is flat, harbourless, and open to every attack, while the opposite shore is steep, rocky, indented, and rich in ports, with great roadsteads fortified by both nature and military skill, and with numbers of close-lying islands protecting its whole length. It must also be remembered that the Austrian coast-line on this short stretch of sea, measures, including the islands, 4882 kilometers and is therefore nearly five times as long as the Italian coast-line on the Adriatic, longer indeed than Italy's total coast-line on the three seas, which is only 3383 kilometres, and longer than the total coast-line of France, which amounts to 3120 kilometres.

It is obvious that whatever nation possesses the naval bases of Pola, Zara, Sebenico, Spalato, Gravosa, and Cattaro, together with the islands of Dalmatia, has the absolute command of the Adriatic and can easily and with impunity attack the almost undefended Italian shore which is thickly studded with open cities.

In order to reduce the probability of an Austrian attack, Italy was forced to occupy the port of Vallona on the outbreak of the war — a port which has now become one of the main bases of the Allied operations in the near East. Her strategic position will be considerably improved both on land and sea when she comes into possession not only of Trieste and Istria, which are surrounded by the Alps, but also of the naval base of Pola.

This alone could not, however, be said to be an equitable and definitive solution of the Adriatic

problem. It is a well known fact that ancient Rome, after the conquest of Istria, was forced to occupy Dalmatia in order to ensure the safety of the Adriatic, and that later on Venice, from the early eleventh century was obliged to occupy the islands off certain parts of the Dalmatian coast in order to defend herself from the pirates who swarmed amongst these islands and in the numerous bays and creeks of the coast, and later on to make herself mistress of the entire region as far as the Dinaric Alps, which she retained until 1797.

To the natural development of the native population, which speedily became Latinized, and to the long rule of Rome and Venice, which lasted for nearly two thousand years, is due the existence on the Dalmatian coast, and particularly in the towns, of important and indigenous Latin and Italian nuclei, which have offered a stubborn resistance to the Croatian invasion which began about the middle of the seventh century, have preserved their ancient and purely Italian traditions and desire to be united to their Mother Country. Dalmatia must therefore be regarded as a country which is predominantly Italian, since the language of the educated classes is Italian, as are also its traditions, its proper names, its artistic monuments and its manners and customs.

Whether we look at the matter from the point of view of the traditions of the past or from that of present conditions, the end of the war must bring the recognition of Italy's historical, national and strategic rights to Dalmatia. It should

be remembered that even after Italy's just claims have been satisfied, a long stretch of the eastern Adriatic coast will still remain free, a stretch more than sufficient to satisfy the just aspirations of Servia, Montenegro and Croatia to outlets of their own on the sea.

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What are the natural characteristics of Dalmatia and their affinities with those of our peninsula ?

On this question, so as to be entirely dispassionate, we shall cite only the opinions of foreigners, and especially of enemies, passing over a long series of most important studies achieved in Italy by eminent scholars, the foremost among which is that recently published by the distinguished Professor Torquato Taramelli of the Royal University of Pavia (1).

With a well known English book we may initiate our enquiries. It is by Colonel Sir Thomas Holdrich and is entitled « *Political Frontiers and Boundary Making* ». The argument put forward by the book is based upon solid ground: « Physical Geography », says the author, « ought to occupy the very first position where the question is one of political agreements involving territorial concessions, and the distribution of races ought to have but a secondary importance ». According to Holdrich, therefore, the geographic security of Italy cannot be in any way subordinated to con-

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(1) Prof. Torquato Taramelli. In the review « *La Geografia* ». Geographic Institute, De Agostini, Novara.

siderations based upon the distribution of the other races. Mountains, in the opinion of this author, constitute the most important geographic features. Coming then to the question of Dalmatia, he does not dwell on the political future of this region, but observes: « It is held as certain that Servia will have an outlet to the sea at Salonica. This is most important, because the Valley of the Morava, which comprises all the most productive territory of Servia, (as also of Bosnia-Herzegovina), is geographically isolated from the Adriatic by the mountains which separate these regions and states from the Adriatic. The coast state of Dalmatia, which on the west adjoins Bosnia and Herzegovina, is divided from these countries by the effectual barrier of the Dinaric Alps ».

Thus the assertion already made, for political reasons, contrary to the just aspirations of Italy, that Dalmatia must be joined to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and so to the Balkans, is false. Holdrich emphatically declares it so: the Dinaric Alps form an effectual barrier. The high competence of this military writer to pronounce on the subject demands respect.

All the geological characteristics of the Dalmatian territory confirm the argument sustained in the volume already cited.

Dalmatia as a whole constitutes a low tableland, rocky and calcareous, which extends to the foot of the Velebit and of the Dinaric Alps, the direct continuation of the Julian Alps (1), and is

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(1) Professor Giotto Dainelli, of the R. University of Pisa. In the volume *La Dalmatia*, published by Formiggini, Genova. The volume is the work of various authors, Parodi, De Bacci Venuti, and others.

therefore the direct geological and morphological continuation of the prealpine zone of our Venetian Alps. This fact is confirmed by an enemy, Suess, one of the greatest geologists of our day, a German of Austria (1). Suess writes (« Antlitz der Erde »): « In reality one meets along the whole eastern coast of Italy with a series of outcrops, which may be considered as sunken fragments of the Dalmatian table-land. The first of these fragments is Monte Conero, near Ancona; the second, of considerably more importance, is the large promontory of Gargano. Finally, we must include in the same series the great calcareous outcrop in the Murge of Bari and in Apulia to beyond Otranto ».

Thus writes Suess, a supreme authority among geologists, and a German of Austria.

With regard to faunistic and floral characteristics, such celebrated scientists as Giglioli and the German, Kobelt, declare that the fauna of Dalmatia is distinctly Italian and is separated from that of the Balkans by the Dinaric Alps; and such botanists as Beck von Mannagetta, who is also a German, class the flora of Dalmatia with that of Italy.

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But, in addition to the relationships established by nature there exist between Dalmatia and Italy

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(1) Compare Professor Giotto Dainelli, *Carta della Dalmazia*, published by the Geographic Institute (Istituto Geografico De Agostini), Novara, under the auspices of the « Associazione Nazionale pro Dalmazia Italiana ».

also those of a common history, a common civilization, of common suffering and revolt against the foreign usurper.

Let us review, first of all, the historical events which have given to Dalmatia, for twenty-two centuries, a life entirely Latin.

On the eastern shores of the Adriatic there dwelt in ancient times the Illyrians, who to the north, on the last outposts of the Alps, were merged with the Cetti, to the south with the Greeks. Divided into many peoples bearing different names, they gradually gathered into two groups, the Liburnians and the Dalmatians, separated by the river Tizio, now the Cherca.

Civilization was first brought to them by the Greeks, then by the Romans, who had for long to struggle to secure the freedom of the Adriatic, infested by Illyrian pirates. And since even at that time it was clear that the dominion of this sea belongs to whoever possesses the eastern coasts, rich in ports, the object of the two great civilized peoples of antiquity was the possession of Illyria.

The Greeks, especially the Dorians of Syracuse, began already in the fifth century B. C. to establish their colonies there, the most important being that of Lissa (Issa), the most northern that of Traù (Tragurium). Towards the end of the third century (226) the Romans had fought their first war with the Illyrians; but in the year 10 A. D. they organized there a province with the name of Dalmatia, which extended along the sea from Drilone in the Albania of today, to Arsia in Istria.

Under the empire Dalmatia attained a high degree of prosperity, never afterwards reached. A close network of roads connected with one another the numerous cities, among which stood out Scardona in Liburnia, Salona and Naronia in Dalmatia, the seats of the three *conventus iuridici*. Splendid monuments and magnificent aqueducts, walls and towers adorned the various cities, the ruins of which may yet be admired at Salona and at Spalato, where there are remains of an immense and famous palace of Diocletian (1).

They were established as municipalities and colonies, and the original language, Illyrian, had to give place to Latin. Diocletian, a native of Dioclea, detached the southern part of Dalmatia and formed a separate colony, « Prevalitana », with Scodra as capital. Thus Dalmatia had, to the south, almost the same confines as at the present day. During the transmigration of the races, new peoples brought into Dalmatia also, destruction and slaughter. The Huns, the Germans and the Avars, passed through without remaining; but the Slavs, on the other hand, established themselves there under the name of Croats and Servians. The Latin element was gradually suppressed in the interior, resisting longest in the cities on the sea-coast, especially at Ragusa, Spalato, Traù, Zara and in the islands of Arbe and Veglia and Lesina.

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(1) See Ettore Pais, Professor in the R. University of Rome and historian of Rome, « La Romanità della Dalmazia » in the volume *La Dalmazia Monumentale*, by A. Venturi, E. Pais, P. Molmenti, T. Siliani. Publishers, Alfieri and Lacroix, Milan, 1917.



After the whirlwind of the transmigrations had passed by, the cities, left to themselves, had constituted themselves into communes with statutes of their own, similar to the communes of Italy. The final constitution of these statutes was accomplished between the end of the second century and the beginning of the third. Of the statutes some were Latin, some Latin and Italian. Being unable to resist the violence of the Slavs, who infested the sea under the name of Narentine and Almissian pirates, and having lost all hope of assistance from Constantinople, they turned to Venice which, in the Adriatic, was taking up the heritage of the Byzantine Empire. After the futile efforts of the Doges Candiano II and Candiano III (932-948), the Doge Orseolo II, on the invitation of the Dalmatians, triumphantly over-ran Dalmatia from Ossero to Curzola (998-1000) and exacted the oath of fealty from the cities of the coast and of the isles; the Doge thence took the title « Dux Dalmatiae ». This pacific occupation, desired by the Dalmatians, established for the whole of the middle ages the historic right which the Venetians claimed.

After the Croatian kingdom had fallen into the power of the Hungarians, Colomanno set up pretensions to Dalmatia; he descended upon it, in fact, in 1105, and united it in great part, for a time, to the crown of St. Stephen. From that time on, until 1409, there was carried on between Venice and Hungary a continual struggle for the possession of the eastern coasts of the Adriatic, to which the Magyars aspired as a national outlet

for their commerce, and which the Venetians could not renounce, since they served as provisioning stations on the way to their eastern settlements. At Zara this age-long struggle was carried on which culminated in the fourteenth century under the government of Ludovic the Great.

But with the death of Ludovic the disputes ceased, and from 1409 to 1420 all of Dalmatia, with the exception of the little Republic of Ragusa, came under the dominion of Venice, whose protection was continually invoked by Zara, Sebenico, Spalato and Cattaro.

For four centuries the fidelity and attachment of the Dalmatians to the « Serenissima » never swerved for a moment, whether on the part of those who possessed a language in common with her or on the part of the peoples whose language was Slav. Bound together in the brotherhood of arms, they remained constant, on land and sea, in the epic struggles against the Crescent; but it was then that many Slavs, Croats and Serbs took refuge in the cities, introducing into them the Slav tongue. This was a phenomenon then unnoticed, but which we note now. The Turks at last reached the cities. Step by step, at the price of enormous sacrifices of money and of blood, they were pushed towards the mountains. Nor was it only against them that warfare was necessary; there was also need to watch against the treachery of the imperialists and of the Ragusans. Thus to the « old conquest » was added, by the peace of Carlovitz, « the new conquest » (1698), and by that of Passarovitz the « most recent con-

quest » (1718), which fixed the limits of the actual state of Dalmatia.

The treaty, or bargain, of Campoformio by which Bonaparte ceded the Venetian states to Austrian dominion, lasted from 1797 to 1806; then the treaty of Pressburg united Dalmatia to the first Italic kingdom (1806), and that of Schoenbrunn (1809) to the « Illyric » provinces. The reverses of Napoleon (1813 to 1814), favoured the occupation of Dalmatia by the Austrians, under whose rule it yet remains.

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What was the character of Dalmatian civilization during all these centuries? Dalmatian civilization has always been, as it is today, despite all the Austrian and Croatian attacks upon it, purely Latin and Italian. Balkan oriental civilization begins beyond the watershed of the Dinaric Alps which marks the natural frontier between the Balkans and Dalmatia. Dalmatia's contribution to the Mother Country in science, literature, the arts and military science has been noteworthy in every age. St. Jerome, to whom we owe the Vulgate, was a Dalmatian; the first Italian grammarian (XVI century), was Fortunio of Sebenico; De Dominis, Bishop of Traù, Newton's forerunner in astronomy, was a native of Sebenico, and was burned on the Campo dei Fiori in Rome. Traù was the cradle of the most distinguished classical scholars of the Cinquecento, while the historian Giovanni Lucio (1663) was also a native of that city; in his works he laid special stress on the

Latin character of Dalmatia. Spalato boasts of a mighty Latin genius, Archdeacon Tomaso, who was a firm upholder of the Latin character of the Dalmatian cities against the Slavs. Another advocate of the same cause was Elio Lampridio Cerva, a Latin poet crowned on the Capitol, who was born at Ragusa, a city which also gave birth to Elio Saraca, a friend of Petrarch. Marco Marulo, a friend of Ariosto, was born at Spalato, while Giorgio Benigno, a friend of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was also a Dalmatian. The celebrated astronomer Boscovich was born at Ragusa, as were also Marino Ghetaldi, the Italian mathematician of the Cinquecento, and the great Italian physician of the Seicento, Baglivi, and Seismidoda, the economist and Italian minister. The naturalists Visiani and Paravia were both natives of Zara; Adolfo Mussafia, one of the first to study Roman philology, was born at Spalato, and one of the most noted Dante scholars, Lubin, at Traù, while there are many Dalmatians amongst the best known literary men of recent days. The name of Ugo Foscolo, who received his early education at Spalato from Niccolò Tommaseo, a native of Sebenico, would, however, alone suffice to shed literary glory on Dalmatia.

Nine tenths of the literature of Ragusa is the work of Italians, although during the last few years the Servians and Croatians, exaggerating the importance of a few minor poets of that city who wrote in the local Italo-Slav dialect as well as in Latin and Italian, have done their best to prove the republic of Ragusa to be Slav literary



**TRAÙ - The Duomo.**



**SPALATO - Peristyle of the Imperial Palace.**

territory. Champions of these absurd claims went even to the length of proclaiming these writers and poets to be the fathers of Serb-Croatian literature, though they cannot with any justice claim to be more than translators or remodellers of the works of their Italian contemporaries. The school of poetry which saw the light and perished at Ragusa between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (1) is but a brief Slav parenthesis in the history of Dalmatian-Italian civilization and has never had the slightest influence on Croatian or Servian literature, which arose only towards 1800. The most important works of this vaunted period of Slav literature are Gondola's « Osmanide » and « Dubracka », clumsy imitations of Tasso's « Jerusalem Delivered » and « Aminta ». It should moreover be noted that Gondola, whom the Slavs have recently transformed into « Gundulic », was an Italian, whose name is always given in the original documents of the city as « Giovanni di Francesco Gondola ». The names of several other poets, who, as a Ragusan historian puts it, « delighted to write in the tongue of the neighbouring peoples », are also purely Italian, amongst them being Mauro Vetrani, Sigismondo Menze, Giorgio Dersa, Giunio Palmotta and Pietro Canavelli.

This intellectual prosperity was moreover fostered by a congenial Italian environment. Even the smallest and most out of the way Dalmatian cities are remarkable for their artistic beauty.

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(1) Cfr. Attilio Tamare: *Italiani e Slavi nell'Adriatico*, Rome, Athenaeum, 1916.

Dalmatia as a whole is equal to Apulia, the Marches or even Umbria, in its wealth of artistic treasures, all bearing the stamp of Italian civilization. Zara with its Cathedral; Sebenico with the famous cathedral erected by Giorgio Orsini; Traù with the Orsini Chapel in its cathedral, its picturesque squares and streets; Spalato with the magnificent ruins of Diocletian's palace; Ragusa with its Rectors' Palace; these (1) are all artistic centres of which we have mentioned only the most important buildings, space forbidding us to enumerate loggias, private and public palaces, towers, belfries, exquisite church interiors and museums. The ruins of Salona are of inestimable value to the student both of Roman and of Christian archaeology. It must be borne in mind that Dalmatian art was not imported, but was the original work of Italian artists who were born in the country and spent their lives there. The cathedral of Sebenico, the portico of the Rectors' Palace at Ragusa, the Chapel of S. Anastasio at Spalato, are all the work of Giorgio Orsini, commonly called Giorgio da Sebenico, although he was a native of Zara; the finest of the carvings on the gates of Spalato are the purely Romanesque work of Guvina, a Dalmatian artist. The monumental portal at Traù is the work of Radovano, a Dalmatian, an essentially Latin genius.

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(1) Tomaso Sillani, *Lembi di Patria* (con 100 tavole fuori testo), Milano, Alfieri e Lacroix, 1815.

A. Venturi, E. Pais, P. Molmenti, *La Dalmazia Monumentale*, con 100 tavole fuori testo raccolte e annotate da T. Sillani. Milan, Alfieri and Lacroix, 1917.

Tomaso Sillani, *Mare Nostrum* (con 100 tavole fuori testo). Milan, Alfieri and Lacroix, 1917.



Orsini, one of the greatest Dalmatian artists, famous both as an architect and as a sculptor, anticipated some of the best work of the Renaissance; the brothers Laurana, one of whom was a sculptor, the other an architect and one of Orsini's pupils, and the painter Andrea Meldolla of Sebenico, are amongst the most notable artists of the Italian Renaissance.

Few things afford stronger proof of the essentially Italian character of Dalmatia than the impetus given to the Renaissance movement by the genius of the above mentioned artists, Giorgio di Matteo Orsini, his pupil Luciano Laurana who built the palace of Urbino and became in his turn the teacher of Bramante, and Francesco Laurana, whose works scattered all over Europe, have added lustre to the name not only of Dalmatia but of Italy herself.

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We have already referred to the Treaty of Campoformio concluded in 1797 between Napoleon and the Emperor of Austria. The tragedy of the unredeemed Adriatic provinces, the persecution of the Italian population of the further shore of the Adriatic, the unfortunate strategic coastline of the Italian side of that sea, which has made the position of Italy inferior to that of Austria from both an economic and a military standpoint, all date from this disastrous treaty. These results had, however, been foreseen by one man — not an Italian. There exist two important documents

bearing on this subject. The first is a report and secret memorandum against Austria written by a consul named Lallement in June 1797; the second is a strong French protest dated February 23rd. 1851, objecting to the incorporation of the ancient provinces of the Venetian Republic in the Germanic Confederation.

Lallement gives an excellent summary of all the reasons for which Dalmatia, a distinctly Italian country, is from economic and strategic considerations, indispensable to the whole Italian peninsula. He also sets forth the danger for the world and particularly for those nations which carry on commerce with the East, in allowing the Habsburg-Lorraine Empire to occupy Istria and Dalmatia.

Unfortunately the sapient words of Lallement were not listened to in time. The Treaty of Campoformio, which gave the Republic of Venice to the Empire of the Habsburgs, was signed amid the protests of the peoples more directly affected and more especially of the Dalmatians, who desired to defend the Republic at all costs, and buried its banners beneath their altars like sacred relics, weeping bitterly the while. Napoleon, however, was not satisfied with these ill-considered terms, and in successive treaties made Austria give up Istria and Dalmatia, which he first made provinces of the Kingdom of Italy, and afterwards made practically self-governing. But the tragedy of 1815 put an end to these experiments, of which the second had been most disastrous, and on the fall of Napoleon the Empire of Austria became ab-

solute master of the Adriatic provinces of the ancient Republic of Venice.

Just as the protests addressed by the Ambassadors of the Serenissima to the European Powers, and more especially to the Pope, had proved useless, so did the protests, opposition and even rebellions of the subject peoples. Austria laid a heavy hand on her new subjects and began a rule of bullying and violence, alternated with smooth promises and flattery.

The years following 1848, which saw the awakening of Italy to national consciousness, and showed the determination of Young Italy to reconquer her natural frontiers and to regain her maritime safety, gave the Austrian government much cause for anxiety, and the policy of repression and suspicion was carried out with redoubled vigour in the Italian provinces, for fear lest they should succeed in becoming once more united to the Mother Country, taking with them the maritime power of the Empire.

After the first wars of Italian independence, and more especially after the campaign of 1866, this fear became intensified, since Austria could hardly fail to ask herself whether, after being forced to give up Venetia, she might not one day be obliged to cede the sister provinces of Istria and Dalmatia, forming as they did, a single organism with Venetia and Italy. Since Austria could not cancel Italy's rights, rights derived from history, civilization, the necessary conditions of defence and the tie of a common tongue and common customs, she decided to use against the Ital-

ian elements on the unredeemed shore of the Adriatic that most terrible of all weapons — denationalization (1).

For centuries Italians and Croatians have lived side by side in Dalmatia. The Italians, who were indigenous to the soil, were the direct descendants of the Illyrians whom ancient Rome had succeeded in Latinizing completely, and of the Roman colonies which had brought fresh blood into the country, and in more recent times of sons of Venice herself. The Croatians on the contrary were foreigners and intruders, who had come down from their mountain fastnesses to the sea during the sixth and seventh centuries. Austria's calculating eye perceived the advantage to be gained by playing one off against the other, and egged on the Croatians who, protected by the Austrian government and police, fell upon the unhappy Italians with all their traditional violence and brutality. It would be useless to give a detailed account of the long martyrdom of the Italian Dalmatians; it will suffice to give one episode typical of the whole violent struggle, in order to show the abominable injustice which prevailed (2).

In the Dalmatian Diet of 1861 the autonomist Italo-Dalmatian party was in the majority, holding thirty seats as against thirteen held by other mem-

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(1) Attilio Tamaro: *Le condizioni degli Italiani soggetti all'Austria nella Venezia Giulia e nella Dalmazia*. Rome, Società italiana per il progresso delle scienze.

(2) Italicus, senator: *La question de l'Adriatique*. Rome, 1917.

bers who, being of Slav origin, advocated the union of Dalmatia and Croatia and were therefore known as « annexionists ». The former party was a natural national product, and while it could not perhaps be regarded as definitive, it undoubtedly represented a party of compromise in the interests of national peace, and might for this reason be regarded as a government party. It was, however, none the less purely Italian both in language and character. The government overthrew it (1). An official belonging to the Home Office, named Baron Pfluck, was sent into the country in place of Lieutenant Governor Wagner, to prepare the way for the next elections. He set to work to weave plots and intrigues, and to work up violent hostility between the two parties. To this end he introduced a new bone of contention, the national principle, the Slav versus the Italian. The two parties underwent a radical change. Italians and Slavs crystallized into the two parties of autonomists and annexionists, and the political struggle became a racial one of peoples whose animosity is fostered by the government.

The orders given to Baron Pfluck were to create a Croatian majority in the Diet, no matter how. The tragedy of the Italians began. The Slavs were not yet a sufficiently compact, homogenous and resolute body to be able to engage in a struggle with the Italians with any hope of success. The government therefore set itself the task of organizing, directing and educating them in violence;

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(1) VIRGINIO GAYDA, *L'Italia d'oltre confine* (Le Province Italiane soggette all'Austria-Ungheria). Fratelli Bocca, Turin, 1914.

it was Austria's sempiternal system. The elections for the Diet took place amid an orgy of violence and intrigue, and the Italians were literally hunted down. The inhabitants of the islands and of the inland villages who wished to vote for the Italian candidates were subjected to threats and persecution. In order to strike fear into their hearts their lands were laid waste. All this, however, did not succeed in crushing the Italians, and the government resolved to take stronger measures; a pitched battle began at Sign above Spalato. The Diet had begun to sit, but the elections at Sign were still going on. Since the first results of the elections in the other electoral centres had not ensured the large Slav majority desired, the election at Sign had at any cost to be manipulated so as to produce the Slav majority decreed by the government, and thus give the *coup de grâce* to the Italians. Incredible acts of violence were committed. The electoral commission laboured for a whole week under the protection of an armed guard. Elluscheg, the captain commanding the district, who was not accustomed to such proceedings and honestly strove to check the countless fraudulent acts which occurred, was removed by telegraphic order and succeeded by an official high in the favour of the authorities. Two subordinate officials of the district of Sign named Addobati and Boxich, who were entrusted with the duty of maintaining order in Bazzana, where an election was going on, ventured to denounce the acts of tyranny of which they had been eye-witnesses and were immediately punished by being

removed from the district by order of Baron Pfluck. The struggle became more and more violent. On the third day of the elections the Croats had exhausted their reserve forces, whereas the Italians were still bringing up electors. Whole troops of priests and monks were made to record their votes. But even this expedient did not achieve the desired result, and the Austrians were forced to tamper with the electoral roll in order to attain their end. The Italian votes were either cancelled or transferred to the Slavs, and Slav electors, who had already voted once, were recalled to vote again in the name of defunct electors. The Italians, who were ready to defend themselves by every means in their power, promptly produced the death certificates of these resuscitated electors, but the commissioners refused to accept them. Time pressed. Pfluck telegraphed to the government commissioner to declare the elections at an end, adding that he would be held responsible should the requisite Slav majority not be attained. The commissary accordingly sent orders to Captain Koerner, who had arrived on the scene with two companies of Tyrolese Jäger, to disperse forcibly two hundred autonomist electors who still had to record their votes. The electoral commission was dissolved. The results of the elections were then announced to be the victory of the Croatian annexionist party, the Italian members returned to the Diet being only thirteen.

The Slav victory in the Diet prepared the way for the destruction of the Italian municipalities, which was carried out from 1870 to 1885. Every

year some Italian stronghold fell, until nothing remained but the flag, which has never yet been furled. The Diet altered the electoral districts of the communes, enlarging, reducing and dividing them arbitrarily so as to create an Italian minority everywhere. The first commune to capitulate was Sebenico, next came Spalato and Traù, and one after another all the municipalities of Dalmatia, with one exception. The artificial character of this catastrophe, which totally changed the national character of the communes, was clearly revealed by the single fact that even after the installation of the Croatian municipality, Spalato continued for some years to send an Italian deputy to the Viennese Parliament, Bajamonti. To Zara alone belongs the honour of never having given in, but of continuing her heroic resistance.



In view of so much oppression and violence the Italian element of Dalmatia, which has succeeded in resisting formidable attacks, and in some cases, as at Zara, in conquering, is a factor of great significance. This element has been assisted by the local traditions, the local civilization, the language in general use, all of these being Latin; by the ever present vision of the monuments of Rome and Venice; and by pride in its own origin and in the ever-increasing development of the Mother Country, Italy, — from which one day salvation might come.

But it is not only the fidelity of the Dalmatians which impels Italy to put forward her rights to Dalmatia. As in the time of the Venetians and



Romans, as in the time of Bonaparte, she is forced by the requirements of her own safety to demand forcibly, and to fight to obtain, her demands.

All the world knows now in what unfortunate conditions Italy finds herself in the Adriatic.

Now that commerce forms so large a part of the life of every state, the more a state is maritime, the more must its life develop upon the sea and across the sea. Now in Europe no other country, except England, is as maritime as Italy, owing to the length of her coast-line, which is very great in proportion to the extent of her territory, and owing to geographic formation.

The present war offers the clearest proof of Italy's bad situation in regard to the Adriatic. Far superior both in fleet and in naval traditions to Austria-Hungary, Italy has won today in the Adriatic, in spite of an intense, heroic and daily activity since the beginning of the war, a purely negative mastery. It is true that she has obliged the enemy's fleet to hide itself in its deep and well-provisioned ports; she has suppressed the enemy's commerce; but on her side it is only with enormous risks that she traverses the sea with ships of war, while none of her commerce can go forward, especially in the central section and in the northern Adriatic basin. And yet to attain even this result absorbs her navy almost entirely. What would be her position if she had also to defend the Mediterranean coast and keep her colonies united with the Mother Country, and protect her interests in the east with flying squadrons against fleets of the enemy?

To fulfil all these missions, under present conditions in the Adriatic, Italy would need a fleet more than four times the size of her actual one, and the economic power of the country would not be sufficient for such an expense and for its maintenance.

Even with the possession of its alpine frontier assured, and with the present conditions of defence on the western coast, Italy would, should the present Adriatic conditions continue, be exposed to all the menaces of the enemy on her eastern coast — menaces of bombardment, and interruption of navigation along the coast.

From Brindisi to Venice (1) a fleet does not find upon the western shore a single protective point, and even the port of Venice unfortunately lends itself rather as a possible snare than as an active naval base, menaced as it is from the bases of Pola and Trieste. The question of Vallona, which has already been settled in favour of Italy, does not regard the dominion of the Adriatic, but the defence of its outlet, which would be hampered by the presence of hostile fleets in control of Dalmatia and of the « Mouths » of Cattaro.

Let us state at once that the Vallona-Taranto system closes the Adriatic, but cannot serve as a base for naval operations in the Adriatic, and therefore the question of Trieste and Pola is subordinated to that of Dalmatia. Thus the root of

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(1) General CARLO CORSI, *The Adriatic Problem, from the point of view of National Defence*. In the « Nuova Antologia ». Rome, May-June, 1917, Vol. CLXXXIX.

the strategic question in that sea is the Istria-Dalmatian problem.

In fact Dalmatia constitutes, in its entirety, a great naval base, which dominates all the northern and central Adriatic. It is formed of three distinct bases, united one with another, under cover from the enemy, by deep canals which run between the islands of the Dalmatian Archipelago; these are Pola, Sebenico, Spalato and the «Mouths» of Cattaro, these last forming the extreme south of the system. The three bases constitute a menace of offence against any action which might be attempted by a fleet against the Dalmatian Archipelago.

The whole line of the Dalmatian naval bases of the mainland has before it a chain of islands which constitute an important first line of defence, and which offer excellent bases for lighter ships in offensive action against any Italian fleet which should navigate the Adriatic, and against our coasts.

Furthermore in front of these there is a second chain of islands which control the channels and form, with their irregular shores, the best of bases for submarines.

It is thus seen that the Dalmatian system presents ideal conditions for a great naval base; that is to say, many and independent entrances and exits; an extent so vast as not to permit of a total blockade; advance defences; facilities for effecting a change of position under cover, not merely from the enemy but from the dangers of the «bo-ra», the tremendous wind which often dominates

the Adriatic and renders difficult the navigation of ships in that sea. Furthermore the marine currents of the Adriatic and the winds and tides are such that our offensives with mines do not reach the scene of hostile action, while on the other hand the mines of the enemy, and even those of our own which break their moorings, fling themselves against our coasts.

Now that ideal and perfect naval base which we have briefly described and which is called Dalmatia, is opposite our undefended and undefendable shores, in the middle of the long extent of our coasts distant but a few hours' journey, and thus interrupts Adriatic navigation even for whoever possesses the Gulf of Trieste, Pola, Valona and Taranto, and has the advantage also of the hydrographic and meteorologic conditions of the Adriatic. It is therefore logical that Italy should desire to retake in Dalmatia those positions which the Treaty of Campoformio took, without war and without conquest, from the Republic of San Marco. Because if the fact of forming part of the Triple Alliance prevented her from discussing openly the dangers of her unfortunate Adriatic position, these dangers were nevertheless ever present to the minds of her admirals and generals. The distinguished General Perrucchetti made this the theme of his lessons at the « Scuola di Guerra » (Military School), and before his death left, almost as a testament, a series of articles in which he invoked the liberation of the Adriatic and the conquest of Dalmatia. We do not think it necessary to quote here all the opinions of military and

naval critics and of students on this subject, all of whom agree in affirming that Dalmatia is essential to Italy for her elemental safety (1).

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Recapitulating the reasons which have forced Italy to enter upon a long, stern, and bloody war, for the recovery of Dalmatia together with other « unredeemed » Italian territory, we may group them as follows:

- 1.) national;
- 2.) historic and civil;
- 3.) military, both for defence and for existence.

Italy, in short, must save the Italian indigenous element in Dalmatia, which has the highest and most incontestable claim to the land which it has inhabited for more than twenty-two centuries in accord with Rome and Venice. This element is made up of many tens of thousands of Italians (2). Italy must save, together with these its sons, the immense Italian patrimony which lies in this Latin province, enriched by

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(1) During the progress of this volume through the press an important letter has appeared in the French review, *La Renaissance* (August, 1917), from the pen of the commander in chief of the Italian fleet, Admiral Thaon De Revel. It is addressed to an American, Whitney Warren, and declares that the coast and archipelago of Dalmatia are indispensable for the safety of Italy; the Admiral, furthermore, emphasizes the Italianity of the Dalmatian cities and islands.

(2) According to Professor Giotto Dainelli, of the R. University of Pisa, the Italians in Dalmatia are 80,000 (compare the study by Dainelli, « How many are the Italians in Dalmatia », Florence, « *La Geografia* »). According to other students the Italians number many more.

the traditions of one of the most glorious histories of the world.

Italy must, furthermore, reconquer the military position which will permit her tranquilly to develop her own civil life without fear of sudden attacks or betrayals. This is indispensable to enable her to develop her peaceful programme of social progress in the world.

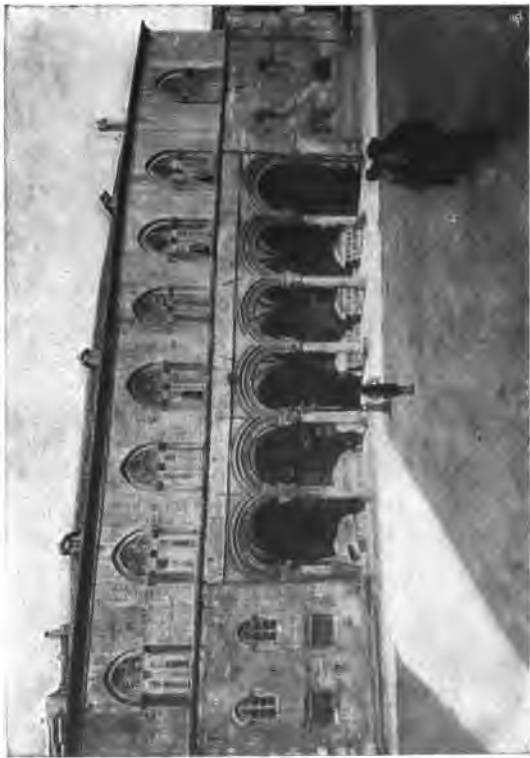
It has been said by some that a good solution would be arrived at by the neutralization of the Adriatic. This is a dream. Did the neutralization of Belgium save Belgium ?

On the other hand it is necessary, for the peace of the world, that the highways to the East should be closed to German militarism. One of these highways, perhaps the principal one, is the Adriatic, which Germany has always coveted. What better barrier against German greed than a nation strong, homogeneous, inured to war as is new Italy, which tomorrow will have more than forty millions of inhabitants and which has made such a glorious record in this war ?

It is no spirit of conquest which impels Italy to return to the eastern shore of the Adriatic, but the love of justice and the desire for peace. Italy is a country profoundly liberal, which will know well how to live in peace with all its neighbours, especially with the Slavs, to whom it has promised the reconstitution of their countries and an outlet on the sea. But renunciations here must not be asked of Italy, for one can renounce the superfluous, but not *that which is absolutely necessary for existence.*



**SALONA - Excavations.**



**RAGUSA - The Palace of the Rectors.**



than 3900 calories per day in the lower zone and of 4700 calories in the high mountain zones.

A considerable proportion of the transport service had to be effected by pack-horses and mules or by the soldiers themselves, before roads were built and the wonderful *teleferiche* spanned valleys and abysses, placing distant mountain positions in easy and speedy communication. In order to give some idea of the difficulties facing the Italians and successfully overcome by them, suffice it to say that some of the items furnished to a *single army corps* of from 30 to 40 thousand men operating in the high mountain zone, included 300,000 boards, 280,000 blankets, as many shirts and pair of woollen stockings, 80,000 fur coats, 60,000 fur chest-preservers and 10,000 fur-lined sleeping bags. And the armies fighting in the high mountain zone numbered *many hundreds of thousands of men*.

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*Italy's first military operation in 1916* consisted in the help given to Servia. The Italian troops from Vallona to Durazzo collected and protected the remains of the Servian army, and together with the allies revictualled them and transported them to Corfu. But we shall return to this subject when mentioning the naval operations in the present war.

As the campaign of 1915 had for its principal object the closing of the doors of Italy's house, advancing by consecutive offensive movements, so in 1916 the objectives consisted in the consol-

idation and strengthening of the Trentino front and in a resolute offensive on the Isonzo front, starting from the bases which had been won in 1915 on the line of the lower Isonzo. During the various actions fought in 1915, over 30,000 Austrian prisoners and an enormous quantity of war material were captured. But Cadorna's operations were always conducted with a view to the offensive, and it may be said that there was never a moment's lull on any portion of the front. When the Italians were not fighting with rifle and bayonet, they fought with sap and spade. While an enormous development took place in the national industries in order to cope with the exigencies of modern warfare, through the improvisation of factories for the production of guns and munitions, in the rear large numbers of young officers were completing their training at high pressure in order to bring the new formations up to full standard; and roads and bridges and *teleferiche* were being built, and new railway lines laid down.

In the meantime hard fighting was going on at the front, and the siege of the Austrian stronghold of Gorizia and of the Carso was pushed on with alacrity. Such was Italian activity on the different sections of the front, that it would be too long to register the innumerable local actions of minor importance which, however, considered in their totality, were the result of a carefully studied strategic plan, and all contributed to the achievement of the same objective.

For example, all the small operations on the

Trentino front had the object of creating points of defence and bastions to scatter the enemy's forces and prevent him from successfully undertaking an offensive in grand style. That the system was an excellent one will be seen further on, when we shall describe the great Austrian offensive of May 15, which failed chiefly because it met with an insuperable resistance at the wings, owing to Cadorna's occupation of the important Val Sugana and Pasubio positions which, defended by him with the utmost determination, prevented the enemy from advancing along the Sugana Valley and the Valley of the Adige and of the Signori.

The year 1916 saw a continued intensification of Italy's warlike activity, crowned always by increasing successes. The latter were achieved not without the greatest difficulty and after desperate fighting, for since the outbreak of the war the enemy had further strengthened in every conceivable manner suggested by modern military art, his lines which were already formidable, enormously increasing the number of guns of all calibres. But the enemy devoted special care to « digging in » and to the preparation of winter quarters for his troops. To the numerous natural caverns on the Carso, an infinite number of artificial caves or dug-outs were added, especially on the front menaced by our offensive, namely on the middle Isonzo and the Carso. These underground refuges were completely shell-proof, thus defying the preparatory fire of the Italian artillery, and when the Italian infantry moved to the attack

they were met by fresh troops behind deep wire entanglements, and by the deadly fire of hundreds of hidden machine-guns.

Under these circumstances Cadorna's advance was slow. A rapid glance at Italy's military operations does not permit us to follow the thousand actions uninterruptedly carried out to strengthen the bases of the line of defence on the Trentino, nor those having for their object to wear out and gradually penetrate the Isonzo line in order to create suitable bases for a great offensive. It was a slow and bloody task, illustrated by the heroism of large units in the plains and of small ones in the mountain zone, and carried on tenaciously and uninterruptedly in all weathers and under the enemy's ceaseless fire.

The Italian troops, clinging half-way up the side of precipitous mountains crowned by hostile heavy artillery and held in force by the Austrians, advanced slowly but deliberately, attacking in sudden dashes, and firmly resisting all counter attacks, tenaciously holding their rapidly constructed trenches in the face of the enemy's formidable lines.

While Germany was delivering her great attack against Verdun, the Austrians were held immobilized by a general offensive carried out by the Italians in spite of the unfavourable weather conditions of the month of March. In attacking, Italy not only succeeded in holding the Austrians to her front, thus preventing them from helping the Germans, but she forced the enemy to undertake

in his turn a counter-offensive with numerous forces, especially on the Carnia front and against her advance on Gorizia. Everywhere repulsed, both on the Upper But (Carnia) and before Gorizia, the enemy also lost several important mountain positions on the Carso. During these counter-offensives the enemy lost several thousand prisoners and large quantities of war material.

Austria felt the heavy pressure of Italy's advance continually increasing, and consequently decided to undertake an offensive in grand style on the Trentino front. In May 1916 the Austrians attacked, with half a million men and an enormous quantity of artillery, from the Adige to the Brenta, and during the first stage of the operations succeeded in making some gains against Italian central positions, namely on the plateau of Aziago and of the Sette Comuni. But the Italian wings held firm, and the Austrians were obliged to stop their advance before getting out of the mountain zone, indeed even before reaching the gates opening into the plain. General Cadorna, who in his original plan of campaign had foreseen all probable and possible contingencies, was not taken by surprise. He rapidly massed a sufficient force in front of the narrow mountain passes through which the Austrians had hoped to effect an entrance, at the same time holding firm at the wings which, continually reenforced, constituted a standing menace for the invaders.

The Austrians thus found themselves crowded into an insufficient space, hemmed in by high mountains and with no facilities for transport

from the rear to the front. The Austrian advance consequently came to a standstill, and Cadorna, taking immediate advantage of the predicament of the would-be invaders, intensified the pressure of his wings on their flanks, at the same time pushing forward his centre from the plain, thus obliging the enemy to retreat hurriedly, until of his momentary gains the Austrian retained possession of only a few rocky positions in the higher mountains, without any access to the valleys which had now been barred to him by the success of the Italian counter-offensive.

The failure of their offensive was not only a serious moral reverse for the Austrians, but cost them at least 100,000 men in killed and wounded, while the Italians took over 6,000 prisoners.

On the other hand the Italian army in little less than a fortnight had accomplished a notable achievement. Thanks to its magnificent organization, it had been able to hurry great forces to the threatened zone at the critical moment, when delay might have meant defeat. On 82,000 railway cars and 1,000 motor-lorries it had been able to transport no fewer than 500,000 men, 75,000 horses and mules, and 15,000 artillery caissons full of munitions, besides provisions, medical stores, tools and all kinds of war-material. Moreover, the Italians had had to carry 4,500,000 litres of water daily to the dry plateaux and uplands for the use of the troops and cattle.

Less than fifty days after the Austrian offensive had started, Italy replied by smashing through the Gorizia and Carso positions, which the Austrians, favoured by the nature of the *terrain*, by

their formidable defensive works, and by their numerous artillery had considered absolutely impregnable. Between August 4, and 9, 1916, the Italians occupied the position of Monte Sabotino and of Penna, and the city of Gorizia. The lines of the Vertoiba, an affluent of the Vipacco, were also taken, and on the Carso Monte San Michele and all that tract of the Carso plateau which reaches beyond the Vallone, while they consolidated themselves at Oppachiasella and Nadi Loghen. This great Italian victory cost the Austrians many tens of thousands of prisoners and rich booty. The enemy attempted to stem the tide of victory by hurrying reinforcements all along the front, but during the autumn, before winter put a stop to all operations on a large scale, Cadorna's troops, by powerful pushes extended their progress on the Carso as far as Dosso Fauti to the north, and the sea eastwards of Monfalcone to the south, thus establishing themselves on the Avancarso, or Goritian Carso, namely on that plateau which military writers had for years regarded as impregnable, if only owing to its natural defences preceded by the deep and broad moat of the Isonzo.



Owing to exceptionally severe climatic conditions, the winter campaign of 1916-1917 was even more difficult than the preceding, but it was carried on successfully. In the spring General Cadorna, having now at his disposal what he considered a sufficiency of material means,

proceeded to extend his offensive, consolidating his gains and confirming the freedom of initiative which he had achieved by his successful strategy. Two great offensives, based upon a strategic manoeuvre, were successfully undertaken during the first period of the campaign of 1917. In view of the continued progress of the Italian right wing and centre, the time had come to consolidate the Italian left wing on the Isonzo, as it represented strategically the greatest threat both against the enemy's rear in the Sava valley and against the flank or rear of the whole Austrian defensive system of the lower Isonzo and of the Carso.

It was a difficult undertaking, because the Austrian right was pivoted on a lofty mountain system, consisting of various lines of high peaks, each of which was a dominating base connected with its neighbour, so that, taken together, they formed a formidable defensive whole. Such were the enemy's lines between the middle Isonzo and the Chiapovano and Idria valleys, extending to the system of the Tarnovo plateau and to the mountainous line on the right of the Vipacco river, to the north and east of Gorizia. These lines, through the narrow valley of the Vipacco, reached as far as the northern ridge of the Carso at Monte Faiti and, joining the Cornem-Brestovizza-Hermada-Duino bulwark, extended down to the sea.

By a first offensive movement, starting from the Plava bridgehead, the Italian left captured the first Austrian line, scaling with heroic valour and not without heavy losses, the rocky wall which drops sheer down to the Isonzo from Monte Cuc-



co, Monte Vodice and Hill 625. At the same time the Italian right advanced on the Carso, fighting its way as far as the immediate approaches to the Feiti, to Brestovizza and to Monte Hermada. All this occurred in May 1917, and the Italian offensive, besides seizing powerful positions, consolidating its left and occupying several important bases on the Carso, resulted in the capture of several thousands of prisoners, numerous guns and abundant war-material.

Alarmed at this success, the Austrians called up reinforcements from the Russian front, but this did not prevent the Italian Command from persevering in its original offensive plan. During the month of August, having attained considerable superiority in artillery and a decided superiority in men, Cadorna again attacked along the whole front. His left, after having completely beaten the Austrian right, captured all the positions on the Bainizza plateau and on Monte Santo as far as the Chiapovano valley, and commenced a flank attack against the positions of Ternovo and a frontal and flanking attack against the positions north of Gorizia (Monte Sa Gabriele). On the Carso he captured the first defensive line of the Austrians while his right made a determined bid for Monte Hermada, the most important bulwark barring his advance upon Trieste.

An active and most useful part was taken in these operations of the right wing by Italian and British monitors and by the great floating batteries, which kept up an unceasing heavy-calibre fire from the gulf of Pirano and the mouth of the Isonzo. The Austrian right wing was thus com-

pletely routed and forced to fall back in confusion on Ternovo and towards the Idria valley.

This great battle had succeeded in smashing the enemy's powerful lines, and the offensive action had passed brilliantly from trench war to manoeuvred engagements. Prisoners had been taken to the number of 31,000 soldiers and 858 officers; the booty comprised 145 cannon of all calibres including several of the famous Skoda 305s, together with 94 trench mortars, 265 mitrailleuses, 9196 rifles and enormous quantities of ammunition, food and stores of all kinds. The Italian army had been victorious over the best Austro-Hungarian troops reinforced by many of their divisions drawn off from the Russian and Romanian fronts and furnished with over 2,000 cannon mounted in dominating positions. Neutral critics have estimated Austria's losses in this battle at not less than 135,000 men.

*The events of Caporetto and the retreat to the Piave.* — In more than two years of war the young Italian army had thus succeeded in covering itself with glory, compelling world-wide admiration. Its effectives were continually increasing and its artillery and means of transport had, thanks to the extraordinary development of the national industries, reached a high state of perfection, while its air-fleet had won ascendancy over that of the enemy. The *Caproni* had proved themselves the most powerful aeroplanes for bombardment existing; in a single engagement 200 machines had been employed against the enemy's lines and against his battalions on the march. Italian military genius had been further revealed

in the invention of the trench mortar, a peculiarly effective arm in attack upon seemingly impregnable positions.

But in these later months the general situation of the Entente had grown rapidly worse owing to the spread of anarchy in Russia. When the first period of the Russian revolution, which had aroused such hopes in anti-German Europe and throughout the world, had passed, events in that vast country suddenly took a catastrophic turn. Military operations ceased almost completely, and about two million soldiers left the front, where indeed, for many weeks they had been fraternizing with, instead of fighting, the enemy. Russia was invaded by bands of German agents and maniacal anarchists, who preached peace-at-any-cost, and sought to arouse the country against its own allies. The ruin of Russia — offset in its moral effect by the intervention of the United States in the war — soon became so complete as to permit Germany and Austria to carry forward on a vast scale the emigration of their armies and artillery to the Italian and Anglo-French fronts.

Perhaps the Entente was slow in fully appreciating the new danger which threatened. It still cherished many illusions, and went so far as to allow Russian theories upon the proximity of a social millennium, to be propagated in the allied armies, thereby gravely damaging their morale.

In France were produced the deplorable phenomena of April and May 1917. In Italy, where several members of the Soviet were allowed to circulate freely at the very front and to carry

on their nefarious propaganda, a state of affairs was gradually evolved which culminated in the tragic events of Caporetto. The cursed Russian seed of anarchical dissolution had found fertile soil in Italy among the Official Socialists and among the other political groups, which down to May 1915, and treacherously after that date as well, had maintained an attitude of ferocious hostility against Italy's participation in the war. A violent propaganda against the war was carried on by the Official Socialists in parliament, among the peasantry, among the factory hands, among the soldiers and among all those to whom the war had brought mourning or personal loss. In this propaganda, seconded by other sympathetic elements of propaganda, is to be found the principal cause of the events of Caporetto.

On the night of October 24th. the Germans, with formidable forces and the solid support of the whole Austrian army, came through Italy's lines, but it was not a military victory which was won — it was the triumph of a diabolical campaign of corruption and treason. The Germans did not break the Italian front — they came through a breach voluntarily opened to them by Italian troops in a moment of aberration produced by the infamous propaganda that had been carried on by the parties hostile to the war.

What happened History will one day recount, truthfully and with serenity, and it will then be seen to what extent the contagion had spread, menacing the existence of a valorous and well tried army, and placing in jeopardy even the life of the Nation.

General Cadorna understood in a moment the danger in which the rout of entire corps placed the Italian army, ranged as it was in the form of a horse-shoe along the infamous frontier imposed in 1866. He believed that, under the conditions created, resistance was impossible in positions that could now be easily outflanked, and accordingly ordered a general retreat to the Piave, with intermediate halts on the Tagliamento, on the Livenza and on the Monticano.

Judged as a whole this retreat was carried out in orderly fashion, particularly that of the Third Army under the command of the Duca d'Aosta, that of the Fourth Army under General di Robilant, and that of several individual corps. All branches of the service gave proof of indomitable courage, especially the troops ordered to cover the rear, composed of cavalry and bersaglieri which sacrificed themselves in furious attacks against the Germans, Austrians, Bulgarians and Turks encouraged by their successful advance and here united for the first time in common action against a single nation.

Position was taken up on the Piave on November 11th. From that day the Italian army, which had suffered all the hardships and bitterness of retreat, resisted for a month alone, on improvised defences, against a superior coalition of forces constantly augmented by divisions brought up from the Russian front. With extreme fury the armies of Conrad, of Kroatin, of Below, and of Boroevic threw themselves upon one point after another of the Piave line. But they were everywhere repulsed.

General Diaz was called to replace General Cadorna, and the latter at once entered the Entente's General Staff sitting at Versailles. Diaz adopted the plan of operations already formulated by his predecessor, and has been ably seconded in its execution by Generals Badoglio and Giardino. By his side are now ranged Generals Fayolle and Plumer commanding the French and English armies which have hastened to the Piave to defend, not Italy, but the Entente from what will perhaps prove to be the most formidable assault of the whole World War.

At the moment when this chapter goes to press (December 31st) the situation on the Piave is still grave, but the accounts of the battles which are being fought there arouse the highest hopes. The Italian troops have already thrown back a hundred furious assaults and the ground before their positions of Asiago, of the Grappa and of Zenson is strewn with thousands of the enemy's dead. The epic Italian resistance again calls forth the highest admiration and it is paralleled to that of the French at Verdun. This parallel is for Italy indeed an honour; but Verdun is a system of armoured forts joined to one another by the most perfect defences conceived by modern military science, while on the Piave there are no towers of steel. The breasts of the allied soldiers constitute here the only bastion opposed to the fury of the invader. But on that bastion in letters of flame is written for the defence not only of Italy but of civilization: *Barbari indietro!*

## ITALY'S NAVAL WAR.

**I**taly's war on the sea has been even harder than her war on land, and has offered less opportunity for brilliant action. Owing to their natural characteristics, the coasts of the Adriatic, while favouring Austria, placed Italy at a great disadvantage. The western coast is shallow, absolutely devoid of ports, harbours or anchorages, while the Austrian coast possesses excellent anchorages and hundreds of safe harbours and ports, from the spur of Istria with the military port of Pola, to the rocky trench-like shores of Dalmatia. Indeed the Austrian coast may not inappropriately be likened to a formidable maritime fortress, with the famous ports of Pola and of the Mouths of Cattaro at its two extremities.

Defended by the Austrian fleet, which is numerically almost equal to the Italian, the eastern coast offered an ideal base for hostile incursions against the Italian coast-line, practically commanding the whole of the Adriatic, while Italy could dispose of only one manoeuvring base, sit-

uated outside the Adriatic, namely Taranto. Another disadvantage under which Italy laboured consisted in two natural factors: the marine currents which drive all floating mines, as well as others which break from their moorings, against the Italian coast; and the terrible *bora* wind, which renders navigation difficult and the movements of warships hazardous without ports and havens of refuge, which are completely lacking on the Italian coast.

But the dash and daring and stubborn tenacity of Italy's seamen and the skill of her officers as navigators, succeeded in bottling up the Austrian fleet, even preventing it from indulging in easy incursions against the Italian coasts, so exposed to the attacks of the enemy's fleet if the latter dared to venture from its safe anchorages of Pola, Dalmatia and Cattaro. The skill and uninterrupted activity of Italian naval officers, and the constant patrolling of their torpedo-boats and destroyers, working in conjunction with those of France and England, have given Italy the mastery of the Adriatic. Her sailors hold the sea, nor have the Austrians been able to dispute their supremacy. The Austrian fleet has inflicted relatively little damage on Italian ships, considering the number of Italian warships, big transports and merchantmen constantly plying in the Adriatic, while the Austrians lie hidden in their safe anchorages, limiting themselves to a war of mines and submarines.

Among the many naval operations and incursions carried out by Italy's fleet against the



And with Dalmatia, the exposition of the Italian « national revendications » is ended. To these revendications are united also enormous economic interests bound up with them. The economic problems which are connected with Trieste depend for their solution also upon Fiume and Dalmatia. None of these three countries can live isolated; each has need of the other two. And this is another argument in favour of the Italian demands, which are not extravagant, but based upon profound reasons of harmony and proportion created by nature, and therefore eternal, as is shown by their perpetual renovation through the centuries: Rome, Venice, New Italy!

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**PART III**

# Italy's Great War

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## CHAPTER VIII.

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### ITALIAN SUCCESSES ON LAND AND SEA.

**W**hen Italy entered the war, she had in view the accomplishment of a most arduous task, rendered necessary by her supreme national interests and by the glorious traditions of her civilization. In order to break through the artificial boundaries, constituting veritable prison walls, imposed by Austria after the disastrous war of 1866, it was necessary for her at the very beginning of the campaign, to take the offensive along a front of nearly 800 kilometres, that is along a front longer than that held by the French, English and Belgian forces combined. Hemmed in by precipitous mountain ranges and held in check by such an obstacle as the Carso, Italy had found her natural boundaries in the hands of the enemy which, during many years of patient work and preparation, had suc-

ceeded in utilizing all natural defences, rendering them even more formidable by artificial means, until the whole mountain system constituting Italy's natural frontier had been transformed into a veritable intrenched camp, a hosile fortress of rocks and steel.

Austria, while dominating the Italian territory in every direction, had also retained possession of all tactical positions and important mountain passes, so that, besides a most solid line of defence, she also held the keys of all the principal gates leading into the Lombardo-Veneto. Hence when Italy entered the war, it became necessary to lock and bar some of these gates and to force open others; to bar those gates which constituted a perpetual menace, since they facilitated invasion in her rear, interfering with her own offensive; and to force open those which were necessary for her advance. Especially threatening for her was the Trentino salient, penetrating deeply, like a wedge, into her territory, while the lines of the Isonzo and the Carso, representing her front of attack, constituted an enormous intrenched camp, with the characteristics of a deep and unbroken fortified zone which stood in her way and barred her from attacking the enemy and from reconquering her natural frontiers. Owing to the situation in the Adriatic, of which the eastern coast, including that of Trieste and Istria with their important ports and harbours, was in the hands of the Austrians, the Italian coast was continually menaced, and navigation was rendered unsafe by the presence of the Austrian fleet

at Pola, in Dalmatia and at Cattaro. For Italy, owing to the geographical deficiencies of her own coast, had no port or naval base in the Adriatic itself, but only at its entrance.

These conditions therefore rendered the Italian theatre of war from both a military and a naval point of view, the hardest and most difficult of the whole world-campaign. For while on the other fronts the war of siege and position did not present itself as a necessity of the first moment, but as a result of special conditions which we need not examine here, in Italy's case the war of siege or position became unavoidable and imposed itself from the very beginning. At the commencement of hostilities her armies were obliged to attack an enemy hidden away behind powerful fortifications bristling with heavy artillery infinitely superior to her own; and the Austrian guns were cleverly masked and trained on all lines of approach, the various ranges of which had been carefully tabulated long before the declaration of war. Moreover the Italians could advance only across mountainous *terrain*, without roads or means of communication, while the enemy had covered his own frontier zone with a complete network of roads for the rapid and easy moving of stores and war material.

The long period of the Triple Alliance, respected by Italy, but not by Austria, had prevented the former, owing to Austria's susceptibilities and to the mistaken acquiescence of the Italian government, from taking the necessary precautions against treachery on the part of the neighbouring

monarchy; she neglected to build roads and to prepare military bases in anticipation of a possible war. While Italy remained inactive, a numerous and powerful hostile army lurked behind the natural and artificial bulwarks carefully prepared against her years before she even dreamt of shaking off the Triple Alliance. Austria had always taken special pains about her military organization; her chief ambition was to become a strong military power, and she did not question the cost, provided that she could attain this end. She knew and felt that the only means of holding together that chaotic medley of races and nations known as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was a powerful army. History indeed proves that it has been only by constant and stubborn fighting that Austria has managed to survive the many vicissitudes and difficulties which have beset her path. Her political functions, both at home and abroad, have always required a strong army, and it cannot be denied that the Austrian army has always been and is now extremely powerful, ably officered and reinforced by traditions which, if not always fortunate, extend over many centuries. But it has been undermined by two fundamental defects, namely by too deep a detachment between officers and soldiers, the first considering the latter as their slaves, and by the absence of real patriotism based on a sense of nationality, which has instead been replaced by a sentiment of abject devotion to the dynasty.

The large proportion of officers, however, and the national antagonisms which have kept up





**H. E. Vittorio Emanuele Orlando**  
**President of the Council of Ministers (Oct. 1917).**



**General Diaz**  
**Chief of Staff (Nov. 1917).**

a sort of perpetual race rivalry and emulation, have succeeded in neutralizing to a certain extent the lack of patriotic bonds. Another defect of the Austrian army which has had a sinister repercussion on its wars, may be traced to the so-called « Court Council », which has stood in the way of absolute unity of command in the hands of the actual leader of the troops in the field. But in spite of all these shortcomings the Austrian army, thanks to its deeply rooted discipline, its abundant supply of guns and munitions, and the nightmare tenacity with which the country has devoted all its energies to preparation for the war which she was to wage sooner or later against Italy, found itself, at the outbreak of hostilities, in the most favourable conditions of resistance and in possession of formidable strategic points of vantage. Add to this, that Austria had been actively fanning the flame of anti-Italian hatred among her subjects, both civilian and military, even while she professed to be an ally.

While it would have been sufficient for Austria to wage a purely defensive war in order to paralyze Italy's action in the European conflict, the latter on the contrary had before her the attainment of definite national objectives, besides those which she held in common with her present allies, so that she had no choice but to assume the offensive, which in order to prove successful invariably requires an absolute superiority, both material and moral.

At the outbreak of the war her army faced the

Austrians with all the characteristic merits and defects of young armies, but her soldiers were united by national ties and by the common ideal of liberating their brothers from bondage; moreover they were aflame with the desire to break through the artificial frontiers which had been imposed by Austria, and were animated by the hope that by reconquering the natural boundaries of their native land, they would ensure its future peaceful development from both economic and social points of view.

If Italy as a nation was lacking in military traditions, the Italian army could boast of century-old traditions of valour displayed on every battlefield of Europe where Italian soldiers had fought, and of an uninterrupted line of famous captains, from the Romans to the redoubtable medioeval *condottieri*, and of modern generals who, as fighters and leaders of men, had gloriously upheld the world-wide fame of Italian genius in the conduct of wars. Caesar and Napoleon, the two greatest captains of history, were both of Latin blood. It may even be said that in all times the Italians have excelled more in arms than in letters, and that they have been proverbially good fighters and excellent swordsmen.

During the first stages of the present war Italian military preparation was vastly inferior to that of the Austrians, so far as the training of the officers and the supply of guns and munitions was concerned, but this did not prevent them, upheld as they were by a sentiment of duty, to face tremendous difficulties unflinchingly, and to save

Europe at a moment critical for the Entente; and the personal bravery of the soldiers made up for deficiencies in their armament, while the dash, energy and tenacity of the Italian nation soon eliminated most pre-war defects and shortcomings.

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At the commencement of hostilities the Italian frontier was a ragged line full of salients and deep indentations. For political and strategic reasons General Cadorna selected the tract from Tarvis to the sea as his front of attack, but this was threatened in the rear by the Trentino salient and more especially by that part of the wedge which is thrust deep into Italian territory, between the Carnian Alps and the Lake of Garda. It was therefore necessary to neutralize this standing menace from the Trentino before advancing against the great fortified zone which barred his way from Tolmino to the sea. It was an arduous task indeed, to both blockade the formidable Trentino fortress and to attack on the front of the Isonzo. In both cases Cadorna's troops had to advance from the plains towards inaccessible mountains, some of which, as in the Trentino, were from 2000 to 3000 metres high, amid glaciers and perpetual snow, and in the face of an overwhelming superiority of the enemy's artillery.

On the Isonzo and Carso front the Italians were opposed by elevated positions and *terrain* especially suited to the almost indefinite multiplication of strong defensive lines, which for years and

years the enemy had carefully fortified and rendered almost impregnable. Moreover, the whole of the enemy's line was defended by two, three and even four or five consecutive barbed-wire entanglements, placed under the fire of artillery and of innumerable machine guns.

Given these conditions, the Italian Command decided to bar as heavily as possible the gates which offered access to Italy and to assume the offensive on the eastern front.

*From the 24th. of May to the 31st. of December 1915* Italy's war was characterized by vigorous action against the Trentino and by preliminary operations of advance. On the Trentino front her troops advanced along the valleys and occupied the principal positions which commanded and barred the roads leading into her own territory. These may be divided into two groups: those which, following the valley of the Chiese, skirt the Lake of Garda to the west; and those which through the valley of the Adige and the Signori valley, follow the eastern shore of the lake. The eastern group of roads aims directly at the heart of Lombardy and gives access to all the valleys and rivers which are tributaries of the Upper Adriatic. The other group is that which debouches from the Alps between the Sugarna and Cadorina valleys and Carnia, opening out in the rear of the troops engaged on the Isonzo front. Both of these groups of roads were now quickly neutralized by the occupation of commanding positions and by the barrage of each road.

It was in this initial campaign of 1915 that the offensive dash of the Italian infantry against the enormous difficulties of inaccessible mountains, formidable forts and tremendous artillery fire was first revealed. Although by a remarkable effort the Italian artillery, even of the heaviest calibres, succeeded in climbing to the tops of mountains covered with ice and snow, cutting out new roads in the rocks and making a large use of powerful *teleferiche*, the infantryman's bayonet proved the decisive factor in the difficult task of carrying the enemy's strong lines and impregnable positions, and it was the infantry which succeeded in encircling and gradually isolating the principal groups of Austrian forts. Thus in the Trentino Italy's pressure on the various groups of the enemy's fortifications became heavier and heavier, and she was able to seize the Austrian advance-positions and to bar their roads.

In a zone like that of the Trentino, the closing of the roads precluded all possibility of offensive manoeuvres, owing to the enormous difficulties of transport which can only be overcome by an army having full and undisturbed possession of the roads.

Geographically speaking these barrage operations were represented by the capture of the line of the Daone valley and of the Ledro valley, to the east of Lake Garda; to the east of the lake the Italians occupied the Doppio basin and the Terragnolo valley. Moreover Cadorna closed the roads which descend into the plain between Verona and Vicenza, skirting the Adige and the

Brenta. He occupied the Sugana valley and intercepted the great road of the Dolomites by the capture of the Col di Lana positions, besides conquering the Upper Cordevole, the basin of Cortina d'Ampezzo, and the massifs of Torane and of Monte Cristallo.

On the Isonzo, by the capture of Caporetto, of the Monte Nero massif and of the Plezzo basin the line of front was netly divided into two parts, on the first tract of which, from Tarvis to Tolmino, the Italians maintained the defensive, while the Tolmino-Gorizia-Carso zone represented their principal front of attack; their offensive here had for its object the restoration of their national frontiers up to the Julian Alps, and the occupation of Trieste. From a purely military point of view this front of attack threatened Lubiana (Laibach) and the valley of the Sava, and this was a menace which meant life or death to the Austrian army, and therefore had an important bearing on the general European war and on the ultimate victory. On their eastern front several hard-fought engagements, in which the bayonet figured as Italy's principal weapon, enabled her to capture the greater part of the Isonzo line. The great hollow running along the massif of the middle Isonzo positions (Monte Cucco, Bainizza, Monte Santo) and the formidably fortified Carso zone were overlapped during the first period of the war by the Italians, who ensured the ultimate occupation of these important positions by establishing themselves on the edge of the Carso, even succeeding in bringing their artillery up to the altitude of that of the enemy.



The Italian campaign of 1915, owing to the superiority of the enemy's artillery, a superiority due not only to numbers, but to the fact that it constantly dominated the Italian positions, was extremely hard and difficult, and Cadorna's successes were obtained at the cost of much generous blood. The mountain war revealed the inborn gifts of the Italian race and the able initiative of both leaders and men. Officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers gave to the war not only their blood, but their keen intelligence and their adaptability to a life of enormous discomfort.

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*The first winter campaign* on the Italian front was fraught with all the difficulties which attend a vast and complicated transport service in a mountainous zone, where means of communication are practically non-existent. Besides, it became necessary to especially equip the troops destined to winter amid the snow and ice; to build huts and sheds, every stick of which had to be carried on muleback or by the soldiers themselves; to guarantee an abundant and never failing supply of stores, food and munitions; to ensure the safe withdrawal of the sick and wounded; and all this in a vast mountainous zone, where hundreds of thousands of men had to be provided for. It is no exaggeration to say that the Italians succeeded in absolutely solving this formidable problem, overcoming successfully all difficulties down to the minutest details. And in so doing they revealed a new gift, which nobody suspected

and which had evidently lain dormant before the war: a magnificent gift for organization. Since the outbreak of hostilities the army service corps and the various commands have shown themselves quite equal to the gigantic tasks which have confronted them. All foreigners who have visited the Italian front have unanimously expressed the greatest admiration for the splendidly organized transport service, which has invariably kept in touch with the advancing troops, ensuring a steady, abundant and speedy supply of all that is necessary, so that even the men in the firing line have had all their needs constantly ministered to.

The Italian army went through the test of the first winter campaign in brilliant fashion. There was never any lack of munitions, not even during the most desperate mountain fighting, nor have the troops ever suffered through defective equipment or lack of medical attendance, in a polar climate, exposed to wild snowstorms, with the temperature as low as 25 degrees below zero, or in marshy soil, where an inclement winter like the one of 1915-16, had transformed the trenches and the zone of operations into a sea of mud. The troops occupied paved trenches covered with matting in the first lines, and comfortable sheds and huts in the rear when the military action permitted it. The soldiers were provided with flannel and wollen underwear, fur coats, fur-lined sleepingbags, chest-preservers, comforters and stout boots. Rations were served out hot, and calculated so as to ensure a nourishing value of not less

enemy's coast as far as the Fasano Channel (Pola) and the island of Parenzo, we mention: the transport of the Servian army, consisting of 160,000 men besides horses, stores and baggage, from Durazzo to Corfu, without the loss of a single ship; the successful carrying out of four raids against the port of Durazzo in the course of which the enemy's transports and troop-ships were sunk although the port was strongly fortified, defended by Austrian warships, and situated near the naval base of the Mouths of Cattaro. A further proof of Italy's naval superiority may be found in the fact that Italian and English monitors, destroyers and floating batteries have been bombarding the Austrian left and the military establishments of Trieste from the gulf, without encountering any attempt at interference by the enemy's fleet. The intense work of the navy, resulting in the destruction of twenty enemy submarines, in the recovery of countless floating mines and in the paralyzing of the enemy's fleet, may therefore be considered as eminently satisfactory. Furthermore the Italian navy has also taken an active part in the struggle on land; bluejackets now occupy the marshy zone at the mouth of the Isonzo, and landing-parties defend the arsenal of Monfalcone, while naval guns manned by sailors are doing excellent service on the Carso and on the floating batteries pounding away at the Austrian left, especially at San Giovanni, Duino and the Hermaida.

One cannot go into further details for obvious reasons, but history will write in letters of gold

the exploits of our navy, placing them on the same level of heroism and skill with those of the allied navies, which are covering themselves with glory, accomplishing in silence a most difficult task, the importance of which will emerge fully only when the complete history of the war shall be written.

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## CHAPTER IX

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### ITALY'S DEMONSTRATION OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL STRENGTH.

**W**hen Italy entered on this war, she knew full well that she would have to face formidable economic difficulties. Germany and Austria-Hungary were not only her best clients, but the countries from which she bought most. They absorbed a very considerable part of Italian exports, and exported into Italy large quantities of raw materials and of various industrial products of which Italy could not deprive herself at a moment's notice without serious prejudice to her industrial activity and output.

As a matter of fact the total value of exports and imports between Italy and the Central Empires reached the sum of one billion and a half of lire during the year immediately preceding the war. Italy's principal exports to Austria and Germany were oranges and lemons, rice, fresh and dried fruit, flowers, eggs, cheese, wine, hemp,

silk, sulphur, marble, alabaster and buttons, while she imported timber, coal, colours, cellulose, machinery, instruments and horses. To suddenly cut off these important trade relations was an extremely difficult problem for Italy, all the more so as it had to be faced at a moment when the balancing of her international accounts was adversely influenced by the repercussion of the European conflagration.

In normal times Italy benefitted to the amount of about a billion lire a year from the cash remittances of her emigrants abroad, and from the « commerce in tourists » which gave a flourishing life to hotels and numerous allied industries. But when the world war broke out, the golden stream dried up, and tens of thousands of emigrants hurried back to Italy during the first months of the conflagration. Relief organizations had to be improvised, and the government did everything in its power, by granting subsidies and finding work for the fit, to alleviate the sufferings of these first victims of the war. Thus at one and the same time Italy not only lost the valuable economic support of her emigrants abroad, but had to bear the burden of thousands of helpless refugees from the war stricken countries. Foreign visitors became more and more scarce, and profits from this source finally ceased almost entirely.

Italy was therefore plunged into an acute economic crisis by the world war. But in spite of all difficulties and sufferings, the government, with the unanimous consent of her people, resolutely faced not only a grave political situation, but also

the further risks and still greater economic trials which her direct participation in the conflict entailed. Italy did not hesitate a moment to sacrifice her most vital economic interests on the altar of liberty, of justice, and of right.

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Italy's efforts to meet the difficulties of the new situation manifested themselves in manifold ways: in agriculture, industry, commerce, and curtailed consumption, as well as in the banking, monetary and financial world.

Agricultural Italy sold to the Central Empires most of her excess-production. According to official returns for the year 1912, exports to these countries were as follows:

Oranges and lemons	for	30 millions of lire		
Fresh fruit	»	23	»	»
Dried fruit	»	37	»	»
Cattle	»	6	»	»
Poultry	»	5	»	»
Eggs	»	13	»	»
Cheese	»	6	»	»
New potatoes	»	7	»	»
Rice	»	7	»	»
Fresh vegetables	»	16	»	»
Flowers	»	9	»	»
Wine	»	2	»	»
Olive oil	»	2	»	»
Essence of orange	»	2	»	»
Citrate and tartrate	»	5	»	»
Raw hemp	»	20	»	»

Raw silk	for	134	millions	of	lire
Straw for hats	»	2	»	»	»
Raw hides	»	17	»	»	»
Total 348 millions of lire					

These figures show that, had Italy wished to take advantage of her privileged position, in view of the blockade, she could have more than doubled her agricultural exports to the Central Empires, bringing them from 348 to 700 millions or even to a billion of lire. But in spite of these alluring prospects, Italian agriculturists did not for a moment hesitate to join whole heartedly in the pro-war movement. They immediately recognized the patriotic necessity of at once stopping all exports of goods to the Central Empires, and bravely set about finding new outlets for their produce. At first it was by no means an easy task, and tons of good stuff were left to rot on the home markets unsold.

The Italian agriculturists, however, did not lose heart — not even those of Sicily and of the Puglie who suffered most — and thanks to the active cooperation of the other branches of Italian industry and to the loyal help of Great Britain, which has never failed Italy in her difficult moments, she succeeded in overcoming the crisis.

But the first stage of the crisis, caused by the over-production of certain agricultural products, such as oranges and lemons, fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers, had hardly been successfully overcome, when Italian agriculture was faced with another serious problem: the lack of farm hands.



The call to arms of all men between 18 and 42 years of age and the repeated siftings of men who had previously been declared unfit for active service, deprived the country of its most valuable and efficient male population, and placed agriculture in an extremely difficult position. What at first appeared to be a problem of the utmost gravity was fortunately solved by the abnegation and good will of the women, youths and old men, who everywhere continued to work in the fields with a stubborn resolution worthy of the highest admiration. This is what an agricultural expert says in an official report: « The women have sown the Indian corn, potatoes and beans; they have dug in the vineyards and sprayed the vines with sulphate of copper; they plough and drive their carts to market, they make hay and look after the cattle, and do all a man's heavy work with ease and pride, glad when they are able to give good news of the farm and crops to their dear ones at the front... By a miracle of good will and of efforts which can hardly be sufficiently praised, and thanks to the employment on a larger scale of agricultural machines, it has been possible to keep crops up to an average not much below the normal, although climatic conditions have been far from favourable » (1).

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(1) Italy's principal agricultural products are: wheat, from 45 to 60 million quintals (the quintal is one hundred kilos or the tenth part of a ton); rye, from 1 to 1,5 million quintals; barley, about 2,5 million quintals; oats, from 5 to 6 million quintals; mais or Indian corn from 25 to 28 million quintals; rice, from 4 to 5 million quintals; beans, from 4 to 7 million quintals; other cereals, about 3 million quintals; potatoes,

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The Italian yield of grain, even in normal times, is not sufficient for the needs of the country, so that from 15 to 20 million quintals have to be imported every year. Thanks to the efforts of the farmers, and notwithstanding the increased consumption by the soldiers at the front, the total quantity of cereals imported into Italy has not been so much above the normal as there was reason to expect.

The Italian government adopted a policy intended to keep the price of grain as low as possible, in spite of the increased price of wheat bought on foreign markets and the ruinous shipping freights. Nevertheless, the disappearance of millions of men from productive work in the fields, and the necessity of an abundant diet, far above the normal, for the army, naturally had a strong repercussion on prices. As compared with conditions prevailing at the outbreak of the war (first half of 1914) the average of prices has risen, according to the different cities, from a minimum of 36 per cent to a maximum of 73 per cent. The most notable rise has taken place in the price of

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from 15 to 28 million quintals; beetroot, from 13 to 27 million quintals; hemp, from 700 to 900 thousand quintals; flax, from 20 to 30 thousand quintals; hay and straw, from 200 to 250 million quintals; grapes, from 50 to 100 million quintals; olives, from 9 to 15 million quintals; mulberry leaves, from 9 to 11 million quintals; oranges and lemons, from 7 to 9 million quintals; chestnuts, from 6 to 8 million quintals; tobacco, about 70 thousand quintals. The production of silk-worms is of about half a million quintals.

meat (1) and of milk (owing to the great consumption of cattle for the use of the army) and of beans, which could no longer be bought on the Russian and Romanian markets.

This enormous increase in prices is borne by the population with an equanimity worthy of the great moments which we are traversing. An active public propaganda is being carried on to induce citizens of all social classes to consume less, while the state has adopted coercive measures to enforce those limitations (especially in the consumption of sugar and paper, in the curtailing of restaurant menus, the prohibition of sweets and pastry, the limited use of gas, coal, benzine, and the diminished illumination of the streets), which appeared more indispensable. In order to render this state of things less hard for the working classes, Italian employers did not hesitate to raise the wages of their men, thus avoiding dissatisfaction and strikes. From a report of the Chamber of Commerce of Brescia, which is one of the most important industrial centres in Lombardy, we learn that during the last two years (1915 and 1916) the average increase in salaries has been 97,25 per cent.

Thanks to the hearty efforts and mutual cooperation of all classes of society, Italy has been able to bear without complaint the economic conse-

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(1) Before the war Italy possessed over 6 million head of cattle, 2 millions and a half of pigs, over 11 million sheep, about 3 million goats, over a million horses and about one million 200 thousand donkeys and mules.

quences of the war, and will continue to bear them gladly till the final achievement of victory, and the restoration of the rule of Justice in the world.

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At the outbreak of the European conflagration Italy's industrial development was in full progress, although this fact was not generally known, or justly appreciated abroad. During the last twenty years of peace her industrial activity has increased to a surprising degree; two millions and a half of men and women were employed in her industries; there were about 250 thousand factories and industrial concerns; the motors employed were 110 thousand, of which 64 thousand were electric and the remaining 46 thousand driven by water power, steam, gas, benzine or heavy oils; the total horse-power employed in the various industries amounted to one million 230 thousand H. P. Every branch of Italian industry, as well as agriculture, has progressed in a wonderful manner; the production of oil and wine, of cheese, sugar and macaroni has vastly increased (1); text-

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(1) The value of cheese, butter and by-products is estimated at 600 million lire and that of sausages and salt meat at several tens of millions. Canned preserves (especially tomatoes) besides sufficing for home consumption, are exported to the value of about 30 million lire. The milling industry comprises 13514 mills. The production of sugar varies between 160 and 300 thousand tons. The macaroni factories are about three thousand, turning out an enormous quantity, not only amply sufficient for home consumption, but leaving a margin of from 600 to 700 thousand quintals for export. The production of beer amounts to 700 thousand hectolitres. The yearly production of alcohol varies between 300 and 400 thousand hectolitres.

ile industries, especially cotton mills, the silk, wollen and flax (1) industries and above all the metal (2), chemical (3) and mechanical industries and those producing rubber goods, buttons and paper have shown rapid development.

In spite of these apparently satisfactory con-

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(1) The cotton industry, which employs 120 thousand men with 65 thousand « bacinelle », handles from 4 to 5 million quintals of cotton a year, and with 4 million 600 thousand spindles has an output of from 100 to 150 million kilos. The looms are about 170 thousand and the printing machines 150. The silk industry employs 180,000 men, over 900 factories producing from 5 to 6 million kilos of silk. More than 18 thousand looms produce about a million and a half kilos of silk fabrics. The woollen industry numbers 553 factories with 25 thousand workmen and has half a million spindles and 14 thousand looms; the production of tops has gone up to 200,000 quintals. There are about, 6,000 employed in the flax industry, and 10,000 and 4,000 respectively in the hemp and jute industries.

(2) Italy's mineral production, with about a thousand mines and fifty thousand miners, yielded before the war minerals to the value of about 100 millions: 2 million and a half tons of sulphur, 700 thousand tons of lignite, 300 thousand tons of iron and cooper pyrites, 600 thousand tons of iron, 150 thousand of zinc; 90 thousand of mercury, 90 thousand of copper, 50 thousand of lead and 200 thousand of asphalt. About 60 thousand men were employed before the war in the metallurgic industries, and the value of production amounted to about 650 million lire. Besides the production of minerals should be mentioned that of cement and other building materials, with 12 thousand kilns and furnaces and 100 thousand workmen.

Before the war the mechanical industries numbered about 13 thousand establishments, with about 200 thousand men in regular employment. Particularly important were the plants for the construction of automobiles, of railway carriages, of locomotives, of hydraulic turbines and of bicycles.

(3) The chemical industries before the war comprised 272 establishments with 12 thousand workmen, and the value of the total output was about 200 million lire, of which half was represented by nitrates, phosphates etc., for agricultural purposes

ditions, Italy's industrial economy was not yet complete.

Here and there was a missing link in the chain of the successive processes of production, and it was by systematically taking advantage of this organic weakness, that Germany succeeded in imposing her influence on the industrial life and development of Italy. By « dumping » and by other more or less illicit means Germany constantly prevented the forging of the missing links in Italy's industrial chain.

Consequently when Italy declared war on the Central Empires, she had in the first place to remedy her industrial deficiencies, and this she succeeded in doing with prompt energy. In the first place she got rid of the German employés and technical specialists who had invaded the country, and replaced them by Italians. Then she set about increasing and perfecting her plants for the production of munitions and war material (1).

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(1) The increase in Italy's industrial activity may partly be gauged by the statistics of newly founded companies and by the increase of the capital of joint stock companies already in existence.

The new companies founded after the outbreak of the war were:

in the second six months of 1914	N. 81	for a total of lire	39.598.875
» » first » »	1915 » 87	» » » »	58.401.425
» » second » »	1915 » 76	» » » »	44.207.075
» » first » »	1916 » 87	» » » »	50.199.195
» » second » »	1916 » 92	» » » »	141.789.175

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Lire 334.195.745

The following figures show the increase in capital of the companies already existing before the war:

In the second six months of 1914 N. 54 companies increased their

Working at high pressure, Italian industry succeeded in turning out all the enormous quantity of munitions, guns, machine-guns, explosives, medical products, lorries, tractors and the thousand and one things necessary to an army of many millions of men, to that army which is fighting all along the alpine frontier to the sea, on a vast front and in formidably adverse natural conditions.

Fortunately there was a circumstance which greatly facilitated the rapid development of our industries, which would otherwise have been impossible, namely the existence before the war of important hydro-electric plants, laid down with large and progressive views by far-seeing men, whose merits we cannot now sufficiently admire and be thankful for — practical and energetic men who had understood, with Cavour, the priceless value of Italy's « white coal », as her patrimony of water-power is aptly called, and had be-

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capital by lire 32,735,900 — in the first six months of 1915 N. 52 companies increased their capital by lire 55,741,250 — in the second six months of 1915 N. 46 companies increased their capital by lire 37,972,800 — in the first six months of 1916 N. 76 companies increased their capital by lire 91,773,550 — in the second six months of 1916 N. 107 companies increased their capital by lire 393,820,125 — Total, 602,043,125. During the first five half-years of the war the total increase of capital, including also new industrial undertakings, was 836 millions of lire. In the first six months of 1917 the increases in capital should be, if not superior, certainly not much below those of the second six months of the year 1916, so that taken all together, the increase in three years may be calculated at about one billion and a half of lire, which is an eloquent proof of Italy's magnificent industrial development during the war.

gun to exploit it on a vast scale. And when the different industries called for an increase of power in order to face the new conditions created by the war, that power was forthcoming and was immediately applied to industrial purposes.

The first months of the war were employed in the intense preparation of machinery and tools, of electric motors and of plants for the production of guns and projectiles. At first it looked as if the output could not possibly meet the ever increasing demand from the troops fighting at the front. It is no exaggeration to say that Italian industry has accomplished miracles, surprising both itself and those who had placed their faith exclusively in products of foreign origin.

The magnitude of the effort put forth by Italian industries may be gauged by the actual military results, which prove the enormous output of arms and munitions. The following figures are taken from a recent publication by Senator General Dallolio, minister for arms and munitions.

The establishments now producing war material in Italy may be divided into two great categories: military establishments and arsenals, and private factories. The military establishments and arsenals, 66 in number, employ about 35,000 hands, of whom about 13,000 are women. The private establishments are divided into two distinct groups; the so-called auxiliary establishments, directly controlled by the military authorities; and others which, although engaged in the production of war material, are not classed as auxiliary establishments; the first number about 950, with over



400,000 hands including 60,000 women; the second are about 1200 with 35,000 workmen and 5,000 workwomen. There are therefore altogether about 470,000 workers of both sexes employed in shifts night and day in the Italian industrial establishments producing arms and munitions, tools and instruments, and all the means of transport and destruction indispensable for a successful issue of the war. The enormous number of skilled workmen required for the mechanical industries, — and these formed the vast majority — was not available at the beginning of the war, especially as the best men had been called to the colours and sent to the front. But in a few weeks, after a rapid course of practical training, whole legions of skilled workmen and workwomen were improvised, having been recruited from other employments and set to work on the production of war material. Several schools for turners have been founded by the under-secretary for arms and munitions in the principal Italian centres of production, and soldiers incapacitated for active service in the field are employed there. Seven of these improvised schools turned out about 2000 skilled workers per month, bearing eloquent testimony to Italian versatility.

But Italian industry not only met the great and urgent needs of its own armies in the field; it also contributed on a large scale to the armament of the Allies, furnishing them with automobiles, cartridges, explosives and aeroplanes, Russia benefiting most of all. In order to save Russia from losing on the exchange, the principal Italian

banks even granted the Russian banks a delay in the payment of the sums which the state owed to Italian manufacturers on these orders.

While the war industry by a magnificent effort succeeded in reaching this degree of importance, thanks to the supplies of raw material (metals and coal) furnished by the United States and by England, the peace industries (cotton, wool, silk, etc.) intensified their production, meeting not only the home demand, but that of the Allied countries.

The achievements of Italian industries are all the more remarkable when we remember that they have had to fight against a serious drawback: the deficiency of coal. Italy produces no coal and is obliged to import about 10 million tons, of which eight-tenths from England and the rest, in normal times, from Germany. Now the price of coal, which was formerly 30 to 35 lire per ton, has jumped to 600 and even 700 lire per ton. England provides an established minimum quantity of coal for the state railways and war industries at a prearranged price, which is much inferior to the present market price just named (1). But the other industries cannot obtain coal at less than from 600 to 700 lire per ton.

German agents have tried to take advantage of this difficult situation in order to create an

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(1) The prices charged by the Italian government to the industries in June 1917 were as follows (per ton): first quality anthracite 345 lire, second quality 330, coal for gas 345, Cardiff, 335, Splint 345, metallurgic coke 445.

anti-English feeling in Italian industrial circles, pointing out the advisability of concluding a peace which would enable Italy to obtain coal from Germany at the same price as that at which Germany sells it to Switzerland, namely 60 francs per ton. But the Italian manufacturers indignantly rejected the crafty proposal, and set to work to increase the production of coal substitutes, exploiting the mines of lignite existing in Italy, developing as much as possible hydraulic power (1), and above all burning wood.

\* \* \*

The great Italian banks have supported, by their powerful cooperation, the efforts of industry, and at the same time have helped the government in the difficult task of financing the war, placing the new war loans and treasury notes, and discounting government notes issued in payment for goods supplied to the army and navy.

The effort put forth by the banks, upheld by the growing confidence of the public in Italian institutions of credit, as proved by the fact that deposits during the three years of the war have increased by 152 per cent, is particularly worthy of note.

The great banks of ordinary credit, besides promoting the industrial development of the country, took the initiative of aiding and favouring

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(1) The hydraulic power employed in the production of electric energy amounted before the war to one million horse power. Another two or three millions could easily be obtained.

national business in its ever growing relations with the Allies. With this object in view they concluded with foreign banks and financial groups, mutual agreements tending to strengthen and facilitate Italy's economic relations, especially having regard to those needs which will certainly arise after the war.

Thus thanks to the cooperation of the Credito Italiano and of a powerful English financial group, at the head of which are the London, County and Wsetminster Bank, and Lloyd's Bank, besides the Canadian Bank of Commerce, two important Anglo-Italian financial institutions have been founded, namely the Compagnia Italo-Britannica in Milan and the British Italian Corporation in London, having for their main object the intensification of economic relations between Italy and the British Empire. The Banca Commerciale Italiana, which has a branch house in London, has made special arrangements with the London, City and Midland Bank. And the Banca Italiana di Sconto in conjunction with Messrs. Cox and Co. and the London and South-Western Bank, has founded the Anglo-Italian Syndicate Ltd.

In order to better facilitate Italian business relations with the North American banks, the Banca Commerciale Italiana, the Credito Italiano and the Banca Italiana di Sconto are making special arrangements with banks in New York, where for some years the Banco di Napoli has had a branch — this last being chiefly for the needs of the numerous emigrants.

In order to develop economic relations and the cooperation between Italy and France, an Italo-French Industrial Union has been founded, and the Banca Italiana di Sconto has opened a branch office in Paris, where the Banco di Roma was already represented.

With a view to increasing commercial exchanges with Russia after the war, an Italo-Russian Commercial Society has likewise been founded under the auspices of our three leading institutions of credit.

From this survey it will be seen that also in the banking world the war period has been full of intense activity and of useful initiative.

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Italy has sustained the financial burden of the war without murmur or complaint, although war finance has not been as lenient towards taxpayers here as in other countries.

Starting from a well founded principle, the Italian government has taken care that, as the expenses of the war increased, the interest on the outlay should be proportionately covered, and with this object in view, new taxes have been imposed, totalling *one billion two hundred millions of lire*. This means that the payment of interest on a sum varying from 20 to 24 billion lire is already assured. From the beginning of the European conflagration to the end of april 1917, the expenses incurred by Italy during the war and during the period of armed neutrality, amount to about 18.5 billions of lire. According to official

treasury returns the cost of the war is slightly over one billion a month.

The Italian budget still presents a considerable margin of taxability. A reform of direct taxation and of death duties would yield a large sum, and by applying a tax of from 10 to 20 centimes on wine the state would derive from 300 to 1000 millions of lire. And other taxes might be introduced.

In order that Italian business should not feel the weight of this new taxation, it is necessary that yearly production be increased by one sixth or one seventh. That this is possible in Italy there cannot be the slightest doubt. One of the greatest students of Italian finance and economics wrote as follows on this subject: « After having seen the Italian soil as well cultivated and as productive during the war as in the years of peace, in spite of the call to the colours of millions of agricultural labourers, after having admired the miracles of which a more intensely productive industrial organisation is capable, who can doubt that the Italians are capable of producing much more than they have hitherto done? As a matter of fact, they have already proved their ability to produce much more ! ».

Moreover, the whole history of the Italian budget tends to prove its granitic solidity. In 1866 not less than 50 per cent of the entire revenue was absorbed in paying the interest on loans. In spite of this heavy handicap, the Italian budget not only remained firm, but improved continually, till the weight of the public debt was reduced to little more than 20 per cent of the total income.

During the ten years immediately preceding the war, the Italian budget invariably closed with a surplus, and the Italian rentes fetched higher prices on the European markets than other consols (1).

Italy has always paid, is paying, and will always be able to pay, one hundred cents on the dollar.

\* \* \*

In order to bear the expense of the war, the Italian government has issued four national loans, the first and second of which at 4.1/2 per cent and the third and fourth at 5 per cent. Subscriptions to the loans were as follows:

First National Loan	lire 1,000,000,000
Second National Loan	» 1,122,400,000
Third National Loan	» 2,933,000,000
Fourth National Loan (without counting subscriptions abroad)	» 3,600,000,000

The subscriptions to the war-loans show a continual and vigorous increase, denoting the firm

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(1) At the end of 1910 the quotations of European consols were as follows:

French	3 %	97.70	Turkish	4 %	91.70
Italian	3.75 %	104.10	English	2.1/2 %	79.94
Russian	4 %	97.40	German	3.1/2 %	92.30
Austrian	4 %	96.00	Prussian	3.1/2 %	92.40
Spanish	4 %	94.40			

The Italian rentes, as will be seen from these figures, held a high place among the consols of other nations.

resolution of the country to spare no effort for the achievement of victory.

The subscriptions to the Italian war-loans were obtained without having recourse to any of those expedients and forms of pressure (« *Darlehenskassen* »), which characterized the floating of war loans in Austria and Germany. The subscriptions to the Italian war loans did not in the slightest degree interfere with the deposits in the banks which, on the contrary, show a marked increase amounting to nearly two billions of lire from the end of 1914 to April 30th. 1917. Also the deposits in the savings banks, in the post offices, in the cooperative banks, and in the rural banks have increased owing to the increased economy effected during the war. In fact the national savings which amounted to 7.4 billion lire at end of December 1913, had increased to well over 8 billions towards the middle of 1917.

It may well be said that the Italian war-loans have been covered with the money circulating among the people!

Nor must it be believed that paper currency has increased more in Italy than in other countries. The contrary has been the case. From July 1914 to March 31st. 1917 the paper currency of the banks of Italy has increased by about three billions, about half of which was advanced to the treasury to buy wheat and coal. During the same period the paper currency of many other countries increased in a far more striking manner. Without mentioning the issue of bank-notes by the Bank of Austria-Hungary (which prudently



hides the corresponding figures), it is not out of place to remind our readers that paper currency increased during the same time from 1,646 to 10,277 millions of roubles in Russia, from 6,040 to 18,460 millions of francs in France, from 1,890 to 8,225 millions of marks in Germany, without counting, in the latter case, the special paper currency of « Caisses » for war-loans amounting to several billions.

Italy's expenses have been covered not only by the issue of loans and by the moderate increase of paper currency, but also by the placing of quinquennial and ordinary treasury notes (which were in circulation to the amount of 2,927 million lire at the end of April 1917), treasury notes for military supplies (472 millions), treasury *vaglia* or money orders (617 millions, always up to April 30, 1917) and the increase of state bank-notes (800 millions). The placing of special Italian treasury notes in London and the loans recently granted by the United States have greatly helped the financing of Italy's war, preventing further loss through the exchange.

\* \* \*

At the present moment the exchange on foreign markets is very unfavourable to Italy. The war has considerably diminished the cash remittances of her emigrants (amounting in normal times to over half a billion lire); the flow of foreign visitors, which also meant about half a billion lire a year, has almost completely ceased;

besides which the exports to the Central Empires have stopped entirely, and those to neutral countries have greatly diminished. On the other hand Italy has been forced to increase her imports of metals, minerals and grain, all of which have enormously increased in price; the imports of coal alone necessitate an expense from six to ten times above the normal. These factors have combined to create temporarily a balance of trade unfavourable to Italy.

The causes of the crisis through which Italy is now passing are, however, like those in other countries, of a merely temporary and passing character. As soon as the war is over and work is resumed, cash remittances will recommence to flow into Italy from the emigrants, who will be better paid for their work than heretofore, owing to the scarcity of labour caused by the war; foreigners will again flock to visit Italy; exports to foreign markets will be resumed on a larger scale than before the war, while the price and consumption of coal will diminish, together with the imports of costly metals no longer rendered indispensable by the exigencies of war. Then the balance between outlay and income will gradually be re-established and the exchange will cease to be unfavourable.

Also during her wars of independence Italy witnessed ruinous fluctuations in the exchange. But in the succeeding years of peace and industrious activity, the balance was not only restored, but Italian values were quoted above par.

The reason of this is that Italy is an intensely

hard-working and saving country, so that its national wealth is constantly on the increase (1). While in 1860 it was calculated at 35 billion lire, it reached 50 billions in 1890, 61 billions in 1900 and now it is nearly one hundred billions. The progressive increase of Italy's national wealth, which has not been arrested by the present terrible world war, will certainly continue vigorously and uninterruptedly as soon as peace is restored.

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(1) The constant economic development of Italy is illustrated in a striking manner by the following figures, reflecting the first half century of Italian unity, from 1860 to 1910. During this period, agricultural production increased from 1760 millions of lire to 9 billions of lire. Thirty years ago there were no industries worth mentioning in Italy, whereas now there are 134,926 establishments and factories whose production amounts to several billions. In half a century the number of industrial and commercial companies has grown from 377 to 2260, while their capital has increased from 1350 millions to about five billions of lire. During the same time 4500 cooperative societies have been formed, of which there were formerly none at all. Italy's foreign trade, which fifty years ago amounted to only 1406 millions, now amounts to eight billions. In 1862 Italy's merchant fleet consisted of hardly 57 steamers with a total of 10228 tons. In 1913 she had 931 ships totalling 876.885 tons. During the same period her railways from 2198 kilometres have reached an extension of 17644 kilometres and her telegraphs from 8000 kilometres have developed to 52000 kilometres. As regards her financial progress, Italy now possesses 177 banks with a capital of about a billion lire, 692 cooperative societies of credit with about 200 millions of paid up capital and reserves, and a vast number of savings banks with a capital of 3 billion 254 millions, without counting agricultural institutes of credit, etc. The total of deposits in the savings banks and other Italian banks amounts to eight billions.

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## CHAPTER X

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### CONCLUSION.

**G**uglielmo Marconi, during his mission to the United States, made a stirring speech at a banquet at the Waldorf Astoria, which illumines, in a very striking manner, the attitude of Italy during the first days of August 1914, at the outbreak of the great tragedy which is deluging the world with blood.

The following is a fragment of this discourse, which deserves to be widely diffused:

« Germany knew that we would not join her in  
« her savage attack upon the liberty of Europe.  
« Her game was far deeper and more treacherous.  
« She wished that Italy should leave France in  
« doubt as to her intentions. On the morning of  
« July 30th. 1914, the day before that on which  
« Germany was to declare war upon Russia and  
« two days before her declaration of war upon  
« France, the minister San Giuliano made known  
« to the French ambassador, Barrère that Italy

« would not take part with Germany in a war  
« of aggression.

« This information was immediately telegraph-  
« ed to Paris, but it was not sufficient to entirely  
« reassure France, there being as yet no official  
« declaration of neutrality on our part.

« On August 2nd. 1914, three days before Eng-  
« land declared war upon Germany, the Italian  
« government decided for neutrality.

« The news was immediately communicated to  
« our *chargé d'affaires* at Paris, since the  
« ambassador was absent. The telegram arrived  
« at one o'clock in the morning. Without hesitat-  
« ing a moment the *chargé d'affaires* went to the  
« president of the council, Viviani, at that very  
« undiplomatic hour. When he entered, the pres-  
« ident turned pale and started back, feeling sure  
« that only the decision of Italy to throw in her  
« lot with Germany would have caused the Ital-  
« ian diplomatist to come to him at that hour.  
« When he had read the telegram, the president  
« could not restrain his emotion.

« In less than half an hour Viviani had already  
« ordered the mobilization of almost a million  
« men whom France would otherwise have been  
« obliged to keep upon the eastern and southern  
« frontiers to protect herself from a possible attack  
« on the part of Italy. That million of men arrested  
« the advance of the Germans, won the battle of  
« the Marne, and saved France from being crush-  
« ed under the savage heel of German militar-  
« ism. Had there been the least vacillation, the  
« least hesitation on the part of Italy, had there

« been one Italian statesman who attempted to  
« do one tenth part of what Bismark did when he  
« altered the words of the famous telegram of  
« Ems, by that means bringing about the Franco-  
« Prussian war, France would not have dared to  
« withdraw a single man from the Italian frontier,  
« and the history of the world would be differ-  
« ently written.

« Is there anyone who, after what I have said,  
« can doubt that the action of Italy was the decis-  
« ive factor in the war? »).

No man, we reply, who is honest, can be ignorant of the great truth which Guglielmo Marconi has soberly and patriotically proclaimed.

\* \* \*

But Italy has not saved Europe and the world only by her declaration of neutrality. She saved Europe and the world a second time, in May 1915.

At the outset Italian neutrality frustrated the plans, both on land and sea, of the Central Empires, enabling the German advance in France to be arrested, preventing the conquest of Paris, and making it impossible for Austria to entirely disarm her frontiers on the Italian side. Another German scheme had also been defeated, namely that conjunction of the Italian and Austrian fleets, reinforced by German ships, which was to close to England the routes to India and dominate the Mediterranean, according to the projects elaborated at Berlin. And the noble attitude of Italy had exerted a salutary moral effect upon all the other nations, great and small, of Europe.

The period of neutrality, besides strengthening in the country itself the currents favourable to an intervention on the side of the Triple Entente, had increased the troubles of Austria. Instead of withdrawing troops and cannon to be used against France and Russia, Austria, fearful of a sudden attack on her south-western frontiers, was obliged to send men and arms towards this Italian frontier. Her campaign against Russia, accordingly, could not be carried on with the energy which complete liberty of action would have permitted her to exert.

The first months of 1915 had not been very favourable to the fortunes of the Triple Entente. Russia especially, had suffered heavy reverses, nor had England as yet organized her great army. Almost the whole weight of the war in the west, bore upon the suffering shoulders of heroic and bleeding France.

In this decisive moment of the world war, while the Central Empires seemed to have gained the upper hand on all fronts, and were threatening tremendous offensives, Italy generously, spontaneously entered the conflict, ready for any sacrifice.

She reestablished, by her intervention, the equilibrium which had been destroyed, and reanimated France, her Latin sister; she lightened at once the formidable pressure which the Austro-Hungarian armies were bringing to bear upon Russia, for she drew against her own front the greater part of it. She did this with full knowledge that the war would be long, bloody and obstinate.



\* \* \*

It should be borne in mind also that there had not been lacking bribes and threats, addressed to Italy with the aim of influencing her conduct. Prince von Bulow assisted by the many Germans dwelling in the peninsula, and by a strong Italian political party basing its action upon the traditions of thirty years of alliance, had put in motion a vast system of intrigue, not only to maintain Italy (in the worst hypothesis) immobile; but to draw her (should a more favourable hypothesis prove possible) into the German orbit of the war. Von Bulow recalled to the Italians the so-called wrongs done by France and pointed out to them Nice, Corsica, Tunis, and Malta as countries to be recovered, so as to secure at last her supremacy in the Mediterranean. It is also known to the whole world that, at the last hour, when Italy, having denounced the Treaty of the Triple Alliance, was resolutely equipping herself for war, Austria brought herself to present a list of immediate concessions, to satisfy at least in part, the national aspirations and the demands made by Baron Sonnino as compensation for the violation of the agreement as to Balkan equilibrium contained in the treaty itself. These concessions were:

1. The relinquishment of the greater part of the Trentino by Austria.
2. The adjustment of the eastern frontier in favour of a portion of the strategic requirements of Italy.

3. The proclamation of Trieste as a « free city ».

4. The possible surrender of certain islands of the Dalmatian Archipelago.

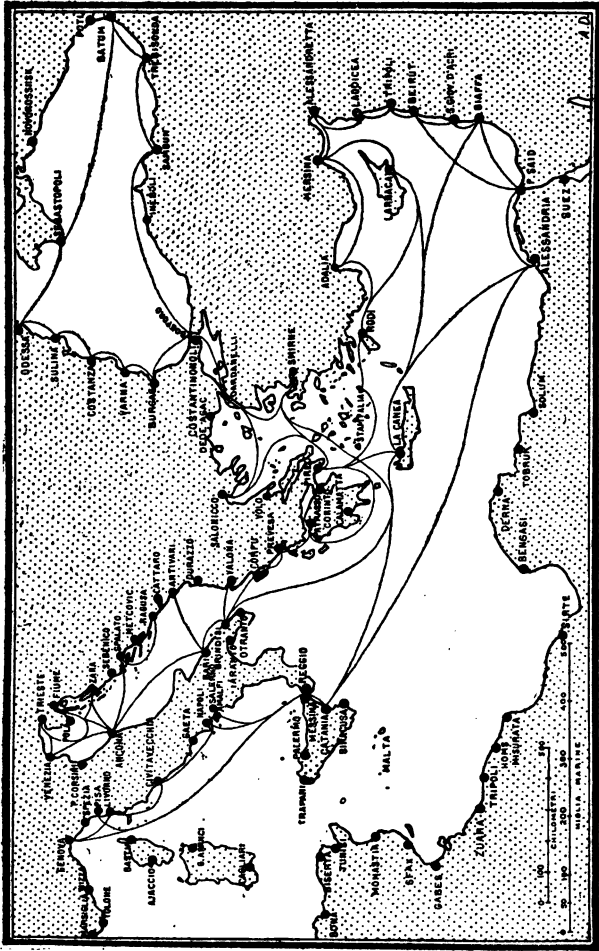
5. The withdrawal of Austria from Albanian affairs, and recognition of Italian sovereignty in Valona.

In spite of these Austrian offers, in spite of the German enticements and, we repeat, the threats of Prince von Bulow who predicted for the Italians the same fate as that of the Belgians, Italy holding firmly to her ideals and her traditions, chose war. She who, as a peaceful onlooker, would have gained territory and wealth, and would have spared the precious blood of her sons, (having moreover, as a justification for such an attitude, a thirty years alliance which had forged between herself and Germany strong links of an economic nature), disdained to accept the proffered acquisitions and without hesitation flung into the scales of fortune the whole weight of her military and naval forces, the weight of a young and prosperous nation, whose rapid development had followed upon her constant devotion to the principles of liberty, justice and democracy.

\* \* \*

Italy has now been for more than two years at war, and is fighting stubbornly, revealing herself more and more as a decisive factor in the anti-German blockade. Poor in industries, she has succeeded in creating for herself formidable war industries, and not only has she in a very large

MAP OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN.



The lines of navigation indicate the traditional trade routes which for centuries have connected Italian ports with these of Asia Minor.

measure emancipated herself from the importation of war materials, but she has even succeeded in supplying automobiles, cannon and munitions to her allies. Lacking in great financial reserves, she has been able, by appealing to her people, to accomplish an amazing economic feat.

And for more than two years her armies have operated everywhere upon the enemy's soil, breaking through formidable positions and advancing, slowly but tenaciously, toward her own national objectives, and contributing efficiently to the attainment of the world's objectives. The retrocession to which her troops were forced on October 24, 1917 *does not constitute, as is now generally known, a military victory for Germany.* When it becomes possible to tell the whole truth, it will be seen that the retreat was brought about by causes that were indeed, perhaps not one of them military. And this assertion is confirmed by the marvellous conduct of the Italian troops upon the Piave and the Table-lands, characterized by fine heroism, the same as that which called forth universal admiration for the defenders of Verdun.

For Italy to have lost precious territory won at the price of great sacrifice, has only a relative importance. Italy's operations are in fact coordinated with the general operations of the anti-German powers. With the aid of her faithful French and English allies she will drive the enemy back across her violated frontier, and when the cooperation of the United States, which is already in evidence in all its efficiency, shall be complete,

she will secure that final victory over the common enemy which will bring the realization of all her national rights.

The Italian army, in spite of the losses suffered — losses which have been greatly exaggerated in German bulletins — remains always a formidable force, with a determination for revendication which raises even higher its fighting spirit. Its supply of artillery has been almost wholly restored to its full complement. And nearly 5,000,000 soldiers, perfectly armed and equipped for the most difficult of campaigns, continue to assure to the anti-German Crusade that hearty and powerful cooperation which has been rendered since May 1915.

These soldiers, wherever they have advanced, on the Alps as upon the Carso, in Albania as in Macedonia, have carried with them civilization and order; they have constructed superb roads, aqueducts and hospitals, arousing admiration and gratitude even in the enemy. When the Italian fleet saved the Servian army, which Austria had driven out, together with the civil population which followed it, it did not hesitate to receive, in spite of the peril of submarines and mines, many thousands of Austrian prisoners whom the Servians had taken in 1915. These were literally walking skeletons, dying of hunger, ill with typhoid, with cholera, with tuberculosis.

Yet Italy gathered them in, washed them, clothed them, treated them compassionately, fraternally. The frightful mortality which decimated their ranks suddenly ceased when the Italian

health officials had assembled them in the island of Asinara near Sardinia. These prisoners, restored to life, were so grateful to their saviours that as a tribute to Italy, they constructed in the island a stone monument to Dante.

But what does Italy claim in compensation for the vital service which she has twice rendered civilization and the Allies, for her unsparing sacrifices and the glorious achievements of her sons in arms? Is it true, as some interested intriguers affirm, that Italy is waging an imperialistic war; or is it true that she demands nothing but the recognition of her sacred national and international rights, based upon arguments of justice, of civilization, of liberty, and with due respect for the rights of others?

In this volume we have set forth with much fulness Italy's national problem, which consists in the recovery of her unredeemed provinces, whose Italian characteristics across the centuries and throughout the march of civilization we have placed in evidence, and of whose long martyrdom we have spoken. It will not be out of place in conclusion to repeat the reasons which call for the urgent solution of this problem; we limit ourselves to a brief summary:

1. Italy requires the completion of the work of her *Risorgimento*, begun by Mazzini, Garibaldi, Cavour and Victor Emanuel, by the union of all component parts of the nation. It is therefore necessary that her unredeemed provinces return under her dominion.

2. Italy intends to obtain with this national unity, the possession of her own natural confines and of a strong strategic frontier towards Austria-Hungary. She also claims in the Adriatic the exclusive military jurisdiction of the sea with entire liberty of commercial navigation for all, and the assignment to the peoples situated to the east of that sea, of the maritime outlets which prove requisite to their commerce.

3. Italy recognizes that in one of the Adriatic provinces which she claims from the foreigner, the present numerical majority of the population is Slav. But she asserts that this majority is the product of artificial immigration into a region Italian by origin, by history, by civilization and by traditions.

Italy maintains, therefore, that her rights cannot be affected by this new fact brought about by the will of the Habsburgs, any more than the rights of France over Alsace-Lorraine can be affected by the official German statistics for 1910, which assert that the population of these two French territories is made up of 1,634,260 Germans and 207,807 French.

4. Italy, besides the commercial outlets in the Adriatic already indicated as, under her protection, assured to other nations, is disposed to concede any guarantee whatsoever of liberty and of development to those Slav nuclei which shall remain enclosed within her new confines. The traditions of government in United Italy are among the most liberal and the most democratic of the world. Already within the present Italian

confines dwell nuclei of other nationalities, — French, Slav, Albanian, who are among the most faithful subjects of the kingdom.

These are the demands of Italy as regards the liberation of her unredeemed provinces, and her military security in the Adriatic. Hence all the accusations of imperialism put forward in certain irresponsible Jugo-Slav circles against the Italian nation, must be rejected as unwarranted fabrications. Italy well knows that in the Chamber in Vienna Jugo-Slav deputies take vows of fealty to the Emperor of Austria-Hungary, and that Croatians and Slovenes (Jugo-Slavs) after having ferociously invaded and devastated Serbia, fight in the motley ranks of the Austrian army against Italy. She is persuaded that the great majority of the Jugo-Slavs who remain within the confines of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and some of their friends and brothers scattered over Europe and America, are at one in a single aim: to slander Italy, and to seek by all means to prevent her from conquering those unredeemed territories of hers which they would wish to offer, together with Serbia, to the Austrian government, so as to realize the programme of a Triple Monarchy conceived by the Archduke Francis Ferdinand.

But for Italy the question of the Adriatic does not stand alone. It is inseparable from that of Albania and of the Ionian sea.

On account of this also, Italy's enemies seek to depict her as covetous of dominion and greedy of prey. This time it is not Jugo-Slavism, but Hel-



lenism, which is at work, especially in France, against Italy. Here again it is a case of colossal bluff, a manipulated campaign, for the clearing up of which a few words will suffice. Italy, faithful to what she advocated at the Conference of London in 1913, immediately after the second Balkan war, wishes that Albania should be independent, and not dismembered among Montenegrins, Servians, Bulgarians and Greeks, or wholly swallowed up by Austria; but for herself, she has not the smallest territorial desire in regard to Albania, and limits her claims to the possession of the strategic point of Vallona, a claim similar to those of other Powers of the Entente in regard to other strategic strongholds; Italy desires moreover that independent Albania may have a southern boundary extending to Cape Stylos, (agreements of London and Florence), so that Greece may not retain both banks of the Corfu Channel and may not transform that channel into a strategic base which would nullify the value of Vallona, dominating from the Ionian the gateway of the Adriatic. And this is all. Greece is not, in any way whatever, threatened by Italy, and can peacefully enjoy the possession of that which she acquired in the second Balkan war, provided only that she, on her part, respects the independence of Albania and the essential strategic interests of Italy. No imperialism, therefore, in this direction either.

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There are, in conclusion, the colonial aspirations of Italy, and especially those relative to Asia Minor in the general systematization of the eastern Mediterranean.

Here also the views of Italy are clear, simple and moderate, and it is not difficult to present them.

It is being affirmed by many that the new world systematization will eliminate future colonial extension in barbarous and semi-barbarous countries, and it is being said that, in deference to these new currents of ideas, Italy ought to renounce her aspirations in the eastern Mediterranean. If the settlement which peace will bring to the Ottoman question be inspired by the principle of territorial disinterestedness, and if this principle be respected by every Power, it will certainly not be Italy who will wish to violate it, Italy who, while other Powers gloriously satiated themselves at the great colonial banquet, fasted long, owing to her needs of internal development, and then contented herself with a few crumbs and bones. But if other valorous Allied Powers, either by the completion of military conquests already promisingly initiated during the war, or by the fulfilment of ancient and vast projects, shall seek to enter into possession in Asiatic Turkey, there will certainly be no reason why the imperialism of others should be met with renunciation on the part of Italy. Italy feels herself second to no Power in democratic sentiments, but

if the democracies of England and of France shall desire and shall be able hereafter to enlarge their colonial empires, we do not know why she alone should remain with empty hands. So that, in this direction also, there is no imperialism, but a just desire that the equilibrium of forces may not be disturbed, to the detriment of the Italian nation, which, with its traditional good sense, considers that the complete reestablishment in Asia Minor of the *statu quo ante*, would be to give the game into Germany's hands. Germany, in fact, which would have Turkey as her faithful vassal, would be able peacefully to resume the interrupted dream of the Baghdad railway, to render Asia Minor within a few years a German fief, closed to any kind of free competition, and to menace the safety of the British Colonial Empire, in the direction of both Egypt and India.

And the same considerations of equilibrium, and of equality of rights in proportion to the equality and the seriousness of the effort put forth in the war, apply to those Italian aspirations which relate to the future African settlement.

Italy has vital interests in Africa, which all her allies recognize. France and England have already carried into effect on the dark continent an enormous colonial programme, which has been increased by the recent conquests of German possessions.

Is it not logical and just that the Italian nation should see her African situation improved in the future? The colonies actually possessed by Italy require expansion, now fully recognized by

protocols and by agreements already concluded, notably with England. Very well then; if the African question is to be brought into the peace programme, it is natural that Italy should participate in an eventual division of territory and in a just and equitable revision of her present too modest position there.



At this point this book may conclude. It has been conceived with the aim of reestablishing, among the peoples allied to Italy, the truth in regard to the Italian war, its origins and its aims. Limited space has unfortunately prevented us from enlarging more fully upon the various questions. But we believe that we have elucidated them all, by discussing them frankly and with moderation, and setting forth the sentiments of justice by which alone the Italian people is inspired.

The voice of this people which demands the recognition of its sempiternal rights, while fighting with such sturdy valour for a better humanity, for a more equitable allotment of the world, for the creation of a state of things which shall permit men to labor for the future absorbed in the fruitful and profitable works of peace, must be listened to. The people of Italy does not measure its sacrifices; and on this account it is firmly persuaded of its right to claim that a lasting peace in the future shall be assured to the country. Such assurance can be secured only by the possession of her natural frontiers; these she demands in

order that there may not be repeated, to her injury, any such ferocious aggression as that which ravaged France in 1914. Her rights to these frontiers are confirmed by twenty-two centuries of the most glorious history which the world has known. To a worthy place in the field of world expansion she is called by her creative traditions and by her colonizing tenacity, which has endowed with fruitfulness both the Old Hemisphere and the New.

*Sursum corda!* The Italian people is worthy of its great destiny, and will know how to maintain its course in those paths of liberty and justice which radiate from the summit of its refulgent Capitol, where the Goddess Rome guards the eternal book of the Rights of Man!

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